

Breast Cancer Awareness



WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women, and is found in one in eight women in the United States. It is a group of diseases in which cells in the tissues of the breast become abnormal and divide without order or control. These malignant cells form too much tissue and become a tumor. The tumor can grow into nearby tissue or cells break away and enter the bloodstream or lymphatic system eventually affecting other organs. Twice as many African-American women who have breast cancer die from it as white women, although fewer African-American women get the disease. Since 1989, deaths from breast cancer are down 5 percent for all women. However, the death rate remains disproportionately high for African-American women. That may be because we are less likely to get mammograms because we either think we won't get breast cancer or don't have access to care. Encourage your sisters, mothers, daughters, aunts and grandmothers to get screened regularly. Too many African-American women die needlessly from breast cancer who might have lived with early diagnosis and treatment.

PREVENTION

- Exercise regularly
- Control weight
- Know your family history of breast cancer
- Find out the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink
- Get screened regularly and early

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- New lump in the breast or underarm (armpit)
- Thickening or swelling of part of the breast
- Irritation or dimpling of breast skin
- Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or the breast
- Pulling in of the nipple or pain in the nipple area
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk, including blood
- Any change in the size or the shape of the breast
- Pain in any area of the breast