

WELL BALANCED^o

- OCTOBER 2023 -

Breast Cancer Awareness Month • Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Raising Awareness

FOR BREAST HEALTH & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

When it comes to many types of health challenges, prevention, and early detection are key. That is especially true for breast cancer. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which brings a focus and awareness to lifestyle and genetic risks, steps for prevention, and screenings for early detection of breast cancer.

- » Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States.
- » The median age at the time of breast cancer diagnosis is 62.
- » Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women.
- » In 2022 there were more than 3.8 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.
- » Breast cancer can occur in both men and women but occurs almost entirely in women.
- » Women have a 1 in 8 chance of developing breast cancer in their lifetime.⁽¹⁾

Screening and Prevention

See Your Doctor

Women should receive annual breast cancer screenings from their physicians beginning at age 40, or earlier if there is a family history of breast cancer.⁽²⁾

Conduct Self-Exams

Starting at age 20, monthly self-exams for women are recommended so you have a good understanding of how your breast tissue normally looks and feels. Look for any changes such as:

- » Lumps
- » Swelling or warmth
- » Skin irritation, redness, or dimpling
- » Pain
- » Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)
- » Changes in breast size or shape
- » New pain that doesn't go away.⁽³⁾

If you notice any of these changes, contact your doctor for further screening. These changes could be signs of non-cancerous issues, but are still worth addressing with your doctor.

Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Prioritizing general health and well-being can go a long way in lowering your risk for breast cancer and many other diseases.

- » **Get to and maintain a healthy weight** - Talk to your doctor about what a healthy weight is for your body type and age.
- » **Stay active** - Studies show that moderate to vigorous activity can be linked to lower risk.
- » **Avoid or limit alcohol** - Alcohol increases risk of breast cancer.
- » **Eat well** - Eating a diet that includes antioxidant-rich foods like fruits and vegetables is beneficial to overall health.
- » **Rest and de-stress** - Prioritize rest, get good quality sleep, and practice de-stressing activities like mindfulness, yoga, and a self-care routine.⁽⁴⁾

There is never a bad time to strike up a conversation with a health professional about prioritizing your overall well-being as a means to preventing disease.

Not only is October a time to focus on physical health concerns like breast cancer, but it is also Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men are affected by domestic violence in their lifetimes and 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men will experience sexual violence. Domestic and sexual violence can cause significant harm—physically, psychologically, emotionally, and economically.⁽⁵⁾

Potential signs of domestic or sexual violence can include the inability to concentrate, appearing agitated, angry, sad, or hypervigilant, physical signs of injury or chronic illness, and increased absenteeism from work or social activities. If someone you know is showing these potential signs, share your concern without confronting them of suspicions of abuse, listen and be empathetic, and ask how you can help or offer a referral to resources.

Everyone is deserving of safety and health. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or sexual violence, help is available.



Want more resources on breast health or domestic violence?

Talk to your employer to find out what is available to you through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or employee wellness program.



**Get More Help and Information
National Domestic Violence Hotline**

www.thehotline.org
1-800-799-7233

Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network

hotline.rainn.org/online
1-800-656-4673



⁽⁵⁾ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/about/how-common-is-breast-cancer.html> ⁽⁶⁾ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/screening-tests-and-early-detection/american-cancer-society-recommendations-for-the-early-detection-of-breast-cancer.html>
⁽⁷⁾ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/breast-exam/about/pac-20393237> ⁽⁸⁾ <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/find-cancer-early/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer.html>
⁽⁹⁾ <https://www.welcoa.org/resources/infographic-is-it-domestic-or-sexual-violence-recognizing-the-potential-signs>