



LiveHealthy

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Beginning October 1, you'll start seeing a lot more of the color pink. Pink ribbons, pink athletic jerseys, and other symbols of hope punctuate the fall colors of October, and garner attention for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

What do we know about breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a group of diseases that affects breast tissue. Both women and men can get breast cancer, though it is much more common in women. Other than skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States. Some women are at higher risk for breast cancer than others because of their personal or family medical history or because of certain changes in their genes.

Risk factors include:

- The risk for breast cancer increases with age; most breast cancers are diagnosed after age 50.
- Inherited changes (mutations) to certain genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2. Women who have inherited these genetic changes are at higher risk of breast and ovarian cancer.
- Women who start their periods before age 12 are exposed to hormones longer, raising the risk for breast cancer by a small amount.
- Late or no pregnancy. Having the first pregnancy after age 30 and never having a full-term pregnancy can raise breast cancer risk.
- Starting menopause after age 55. Like starting one's period early, being exposed to estrogen hormones for a longer time later in life also raises the risk of breast cancer.
- Women who are not physically active have a higher risk of getting breast cancer.
- Being overweight or obese after menopause. Older women who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of getting breast cancer than those of a normal weight.

See more risk factors [here](#).

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What Can I Do to Reduce My Risk of Breast Cancer?

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Research shows that lack of nighttime sleep can be a risk factor.
- Don't drink alcohol, or limit alcoholic drinks to no more than one per day.
- Avoid exposure to chemicals that can cause cancer (carcinogens) and chemicals that interfere with the normal function of the body.
- Limit exposure to radiation from medical imaging tests like X-rays, CT scans, and PET scans if not medically necessary.
- If you are taking, or have been told to take, hormone replacement therapy or oral contraceptives (birth control pills), ask your doctor about the risks and find out if it is right for you.
- Breastfeed any children you may have, if possible.
- If you have a family history of breast cancer or inherited changes in your BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, you may be at high risk for getting breast cancer. Talk to your doctor about more ways to lower your risk.
- Staying healthy throughout your life will lower your risk of developing cancer, and improve your chances of surviving cancer if it occurs.

Breast Cancer Screening Tests

The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that women who are 50 to 74 years old and are at average risk for breast cancer get a mammogram every two years. Women who are 40 to 49 years old should talk to their doctor or other health care professional about when to start and how often to get a mammogram.

Mammogram

- A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early, when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms. Having regular mammograms can lower the risk of dying from breast cancer.

Breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

- A breast MRI uses magnets and radio waves to take pictures of the breast. MRI is used along with mammograms to screen women who are at high risk for getting breast cancer. Because breast MRIs may appear abnormal even when there is no cancer, they are not used for women at average risk.

Clinical Breast Exam

- A clinical breast exam is an examination by a doctor or nurse, who uses his or her hands to feel for lumps or other changes.

Breast Self-Awareness

- Being familiar with how your breasts look and feel can help you notice symptoms such as lumps, pain, or changes in size that may be of concern. These could include changes found during a breast self-exam. You should report any changes that you notice to your doctor or health care provider.

Source: CDC.gov

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Recipe Row

Maple Pumpkin Smoothie

Ingredients (serves 1)

3/4 cup pumpkin, pack solid
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
blend
1 teaspoon flaxseed oil
1/2 cup fat-free Greek vanilla yogurt
1/4 cup almond milk, unsweetened
1/2 banana

Directions

Place all of the items in a blender with ice and blend until smooth

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 530 Total Fat: 15g Sat. Fat: 1.5g Protein: 15g

This smoothie packs a punch of vitamin A, which helps support the immune system and promotes good vision.

More recipes:

capitalbluestore.com/blog/Recipes.

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