



## **Breast Cancer: Things You Should Know**

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women, after skin cancer. When detected early, it's far easier to treat—so understanding what it is, how to spot it, and when to get screened can save lives.

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### **What Is Breast Cancer?**

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the breast grow out of control. These cancerous cells can invade surrounding tissue or spread (metastasize) to other parts of the body.

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### **Warning Signs to Watch For**

If you notice any of these changes, talk to your health care provider right away. Many benign conditions can cause similar symptoms, but it's best to be safe.

- New lump in the breast or underarm
  - Thickening or swelling of part of the breast
  - Irritation or dimpling of breast skin
  - Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or on the breast
  - Pulling in of the nipple
  - Nipple discharge (other than breast milk), including blood
  - Any change in breast size or shape
  - Pain in the breast
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### **Finding Breast Cancer Early**

Breast cancer screening checks for disease before symptoms appear. The most common tool is the mammogram—an X-ray of the breast that can reveal tiny abnormalities.

- Ages 50–74 at average risk: mammogram every two years
- Ages 40–49 or higher risk (family history): discuss personalized start time and frequency with your doctor

Balancing screening benefits and risks is key. If you're in your 40s, talk through your risk factors with a health care professional to decide when to begin.

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## Lowering Your Risk

Knowing your personal risk helps guide prevention and screening decisions. Your doctor will evaluate both non-modifiable and modifiable factors:

### Non-modifiable Factors

Personal history of breast problems

Family history of breast cancer

Breast density

Age (most cases found after 50)

Menstrual and childbirth history

Chest radiation exposure

Exposure to DES (1940–1971)

BRCA1/BRCA2 genetic mutations

### Modifiable Factors

Hormone replacement therapy use

Maintaining a healthy weight

Regular physical activity

Limiting alcohol ( $\leq 1$  drink per day)

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## Men Get Breast Cancer Too

All people have breast tissue. Though rare—about 1% of diagnoses—men can develop breast cancer. Black men face higher rates and poorer outcomes compared to white men, due in part to disparities in access, insurance, and care quality.

### Signs in Men

- Lump in the chest (often painless)
- Redness or scaling of nipple or chest skin
- Nipple retraction (turning inward)
- Nipple discharge

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### **Men's Risk Factors**

- Age (most cases after 50)
- Family history of breast cancer
- Klinefelter syndrome (extra X chromosome)
- Heavy alcohol use
- Obesity
- Genetic mutations (BRCA1/BRCA2)
- Chest radiation or hormone therapy for prostate cancer
- Testicular injury, swelling, or surgery
- Liver disease (chrrhosis)

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### **How to Combat Breast Cancer**

- Schedule and keep annual exams—don't wait for symptoms.
- Eat whole, fiber-rich foods (vegetables, berries, beans).
- Stay active and maintain a healthy weight.
- Limit alcohol intake.
- Review your family health history and discuss genetic testing if indicated.

Early detection and proactive health care are your best defenses—no matter your gender.

Stay informed. Stay screened. Stay strong.

For resources on Men's Health and Male Breast Cancer visit:

[www.blackmenshealth.com](http://www.blackmenshealth.com)

<https://www.blackmenshealth.com/men-get-breast-cancer-too/>

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### **Scripture for the Month**

*"Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man."*

*(Psalms 107:19-21 ESV)*

In Faith & Health  
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