



BASIC BREAST HEALTH

For you and your loved ones

KNOW YOUR RISK

- Talk to your family about your family health history.
- Talk to your doctor about your personal risk of breast cancer.
- Be aware of the risk factors — such as being a woman, getting older, never having children or being overweight after menopause.

GET SCREENED

When breast cancer is found early and confined to the breast, the five-year survival rate is 98 percent.

- **MAMMOGRAM:** X-ray of the breast that can find breast cancer in its earliest stages. Have one every year starting at age 40 if you are at average risk.
- **CLINICAL BREAST EXAM:** Physical exam by a health care provider who checks for any lumps or changes. Have one at least every three years starting at age 20, and every year starting at 40.

KNOW WHAT IS NORMAL FOR YOU

- **BREAST SELF EXAM:** A tool that may help you learn how your breasts look and feel. Report any changes to your health care provider right away.

MAKE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Add exercise to your routine
- Limit alcohol intake

Am I at Risk for Breast Cancer?

Most women have more than one known risk factor, yet will never get the disease. Some risk factors can be controlled, while others cannot be changed.

RISK FACTORS

- being a woman
- getting older
- having a mutation in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer gene
- having a personal history of breast or ovarian cancer
- having a family history of breast or ovarian cancer
- having high breast density on a mammogram
- having a breast biopsy showing hyperplasia or carcinoma in situ
- never having children
- having your first child after 35
- radiation exposure, frequent x-rays in youth
- high bone density
- gaining weight as an adult or being overweight after menopause
- current or recent use of postmenopausal hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

Questions & Answers About Your Breast Health



What can I do to reduce my risk of getting breast cancer?

There is no sure way to avoid breast cancer. But, you can do things that may improve your overall health. Maintain a healthy weight. Exercise and eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables.

My mother had breast cancer a few years ago. Does that mean that I will get breast cancer too?

We don't know what causes breast cancer. But, most women who get breast cancer have no family history of the disease. If someone in your family has had breast cancer or you are concerned about your risk, talk to your doctor. Learn about your choices and ask when to start getting mammograms.

I am currently taking birth control pills. Do birth control pills increase my chance of developing breast cancer?

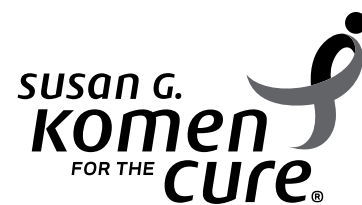
If you are currently taking birth control pills, your breast cancer risk is slightly increased. The increased risk from using birth control pills becomes less after you have stopped using them. After about 10 years your risk returns to normal.

Does drinking alcohol increase my chance of breast cancer?

Studies have shown that drinking alcohol can increase your risk for breast cancer.

My breasts feel lumpy and tender at certain times of the month. Does this increase my chance for breast cancer?

Breast lumpiness with tenderness or pain at certain times of the month is called *fibrocystic breast changes*. These breast changes are common, especially before your period, and do not increase your chance of getting breast cancer. Get to know the way your breasts look and feel. Learn what is normal for you. If you notice any change, see your doctor right away.



For more information or if you have other questions about your breast health or breast cancer, please call our breast care helpline at 1-877-465-6636 or visit komen.org.