



# Breast Cancer Awareness



October 2012

According to the American Cancer Society, 192,370 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, making it the most common cancer after skin cancer – and second leading cause of cancer death among women. The GOOD news is that the American Breast Cancer Foundation says there are 1.6 million American women who have survived breast cancer are alive today and that when breast cancer is detected early, more than 90% of women survive.

Here are some of the risk factors and important facts about breast cancer.

### Risk Factors:

**Age** - the chance of developing breast cancer goes up as a woman gets older.

**Family History** - If a mother, sister or daughter has had breast cancer a woman's chances double for developing breast cancer.

**Personal History** - A woman who has had breast cancer has a higher chance of developing cancer in the same breast, the other breast or some where else in the body.

**Race** - White women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than African-American women. But African American women are more likely to die of breast cancer. Asian, Hispanic, and Native-American women have a lower risk of developing and dying from breast cancer.

**Menstruation** - Women who began having periods early (before age 12) or who went through the change of life (menopause) after the age of 55 have a slightly increased risk of breast cancer.

**Childbirth** - Women who have not had children, or who had their first child after age 30, have a slightly higher risk of breast cancer.

**Birth Control** - Studies have found that women who use birth control pills have a slightly greater risk of breast cancer than women who have never used them.

**Hormone Therapy** - Postmenopausal women who take combined estrogen and progesterone hormone therapy have an increased risk of breast cancer.

**Breast feeding** - Some studies have shown that breast-feeding slightly lowers breast cancer risk, especially if the breast-feeding lasts 1½ to 2 years.

**Smoking** - Women who smoke or who are subjected to second-hand smoke significantly raise their risk of developing breast cancer.

**Alcohol Use** - Use of alcohol is clearly linked to an increased risk of getting breast cancer. Those who have 2 to 5 drinks daily have about 1½ times the risk of women who drink no alcohol.

Is there a health topic you want to know more about? For more information about fitness, education and nutrition, or other health programs, contact Grace Keith, Health Educator, 850.926.0400 x. 215 or Grace\_Keith@doh.state.fl.us

## Good News About Breast Cancer...

**Earlier Diagnostic Methods:** There are more methods than just mammography now. These methods help detect breast cancer in women who have dense tissue, implants or other breast complexities. They include ultrasounds, MRIs and molecular breast imaging. Molecular breast imaging can show cancer “hot spots” without having to wait on biopsy results.

**More Effective Treatments:** Treatments still include surgery, radiation and chemotherapy but there are also more specific types of treatment that are tailored to the individual patient. Other treatments include hormonal, pharmacological and biologic therapy. Cancer research is making great progress in new treatments that will be even more effective.

**Improved Diets:** Studies show that breast cancer is less common in women who eat foods low in total and saturated fats and rich in fruits and vegetables. Currently, the “Mediterranean” type diet is considered to be one of the healthiest as well as “Clean” eating - eating foods that are minimally processed and are not packed with preservatives and other chemicals.

**Increased Self Breast Exams:** Many women are learning to perform regular self-breast exams which is leading to better self-care and awareness. As a result more women are finding breast issues and talking to their doctors earlier.

**Better Support :** Over the last few years, more support systems have been put into place for breast cancer victims, survivors and their families. Emotional and spiritual support are critical for women who are fighting breast cancer. We also know that when a woman develops breast cancer, her family and friends need to know how to provide support and receive support for themselves as well.

The Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Program makes it easy to get the breast cancer screenings doctors recommend. The national program emphasizes providing services for women who have not had a screening exam in 5 years or longer. The screenings are free or low cost if you meet program eligibility requirements. For more information, call the Wakulla County Health Department at 926-0400.



**Basic First Aid...** Please call for more information on the next class at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person.



### Hands-Only CPR, No Excuses

The next Hands-only CPR class is on Thursday, October 25, 7-9 p.m. at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person.



The Wakulla County Health Department now has a Service Provider Kiosk to help you find who and what you are looking for. The kiosk is located in the lobby of the Health Department, which is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

You can search sites such as 211Big Bend, Whole Child Leon, Florida Department of Children and Families and Wakulla County Coalition for Youth Resource Directory. Many providers are local and have sliding scales for those families in crisis. You can find all types of services from daily needs to emergency assistance. This service is also very helpful in the event that you have just moved into the area. The kiosk and electronic referral system were made possible through a grant sponsored by the Blue Foundation of Florida. There is no charge to use the kiosk.

