

THE BALM
IN GILEAD^{INC.}

Sunday Morning

HEALTH CORNER



Power in the Pink: Early Breast Cancer Detection Saves Lives

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and while the signature pink ribbon helps spark conversations, the real work lies in educating the public on risk factors, early detection methods, the importance of regular screenings, management, and recovery of the disease that affects 2.4 million women worldwide.

Understanding Risk Factors

Breast cancer is a disease where cells in the breast grow out of control and form a harmful mass of tissue—a tumor. It is the most common cancer diagnosed among women in the U.S. each year, and Black women are more likely to die from breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group.

The causes of breast cancer include inherited factors such as sex and age, genetics, family history, and reproductive history, as well as lifestyle factors like physical inactivity, body weight, or alcohol use. If you have a strong family history of cancer or are simply worried about your risks, there are steps you can take to decrease your risk.

Warning Signs & Symptoms

- A breast lump or thickened area of the skin that feels different from surrounding tissue
- Swelling of all or part of the breast, even if no lump can be felt
- Dimpling skin, resembling an orange peel
- Nipple or breast skin that is red, dry, flaking or thickened
- Nipple retraction (turning inward)
- Nipple discharge (other than breast milk)
- Swollen lymph nodes under the arm or near the collarbone

What You Can Do: Lowering Your Risks

- **Manage your physical health.** Exercising, maintaining a healthy weight can decrease your breast cancer risk.
- **Avoid smoking, limit alcohol.** Studies have linked smoking and alcohol consumption to an increased risk of developing breast cancer..
- **Breastfeed if possible.** Nursing for several months can offer added protection against breast cancer.
- **Know your family history.** A full picture of your family history on both sides can help guide conversations with your doctor and better assess the best preventative measures.
- **Get regular screenings.** Regular mammograms typically begin at age 40, but start earlier for those with high risk factors.



The mission of **The Balm In Gilead, Inc.** is to improve the health of individuals who are most at risk for chronic and acute diseases by supporting faith and community organizations in areas that mobilize and strengthen their capacity to increase awareness in areas of prevention, treatment and access to care through education, programming and advocacy. Learn more at balmingilead.org.

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