

Health Connections

Connect. Inform. Empower.

Breast Cancer

Most breast cancers begin in the lobules that produce milk or the ducts that carry milk from the lobules to the nipple. Cells that line either of these structures may lose the normal controls that tell them when and where to grow and when to die. Uncontrolled growth leads to a piling up of cells inside the lobules and/or ducts and is called *in situ*. Invasive ductal or lobular cancers are ones that have spread into surrounding breast fat. Both *in situ* and invasive cancers can form a lump or tumor, but only invasive cancers have the ability to spread to lymph nodes or other parts of the body.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 192,370 American women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in 2009 and 1,910 men. Risk factors for developing breast cancer include family history, age, and for women, the number of menstrual cycles she has had-determined by age of first period, age of menopause, and number of pregnancies and length of time breast feeding. Other risk factors include animal fats in the diet, lack of Vitamin D, use of alcohol, and weight.

Routine use of screening mammograms has significantly decreased the overall chance of dying from breast cancer, but it still claims the lives of more woman than any other cancer except lung cancer. Screening mammograms usually find cancers before they are large enough to cause symptoms. Some cancers, however, will be present as a painless lump or nipple discharge.

Most breast cancers are highly curable when diagnosed at an early stage.

Source: Salem Cancer Institute

Websites

- American Cancer Society: www.cancer.org
- National Cancer Institute: www.cancer.gov
- Breast Cancer Network of Strength: www.networkofstrength.org
- Imaginis: www.imaginis.com
- Sister Study: www.sisterstudy.org
- Susan G. Komen for the Cure: www.komen.org

Print Materials Available in the CHEC Resource Center

- Breast Cancer Clear & Simple: All Your Questions Answered (2008)
- Living Through Breast Cancer (2007)
- Choices in Breast Cancer Treatment (2007)

The Community Health Education Center (CHEC) at Salem Hospital complements the health education you are receiving from your healthcare providers. Your providers should always be your primary resource for health education. Information at the CHEC should not be construed as personal medical advice.

 **Community Health
Education Center**
A part of Salem Health

503-814-CHEC (2432) • www.salemhealth.org/chec

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Classes, Support Groups, and Community Programs

- Salem Cancer Institute 503-562-4321 www.salemcancercare.org

Providing hope, comfort and confidence to people living with cancer and those who support them. Please call Salem Cancer Institute for more information about the following support groups and classes:

- Living as a Cancer Survivor for Women
- Women's Metastatic Support Group
- Cancer Support Group
- Knit Well
- Starting Chemotherapy
- Starting Radiation Treatment
- Yoga
- YWCA Breast Cancer Support Group - 503-581-9922 x304

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