

GMHC's Nutrition & Wellness Program

BREAST CANCER

In the 21st century, the two most pressing issues in women's health have been **AIDS** and **breast cancer**.

Women who have HIV/AIDS do **not** have an increased risk for breast cancer. But, it is still very important that **all** women know how to reduce the risk of and detect breast cancer.

COMMON RISK FACTORS

- Being a woman
- Increased age
- Family history
- Race (African- American, Caucasian)
- Overweight
- Physically inactive
- Increased alcohol intake

STATISTICS

Research shows 1 out of ever 8 women in the U.S (12%) may develop breast cancer in their lifetime.

BREAST ANATOMY

The breast is made up of fatty and fibrous tissues, lymph vessels and glands, which all contribute to what normally makes the breast feel dense.

WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Cells normally divide, grow and die daily. The cells may develop into a mass, which is just a harmless cyst. Commonly, most lumps in the breast are the result of fibrocystic breast changes during the menstrual cycle and are not harmful.

In breast cancer, the cells grow abnormally to form a tumor in the breast. The tumor can be benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Malignant cells are harmful because they can metastasize or spread through the bloodstream and infect other tissues/organs such as the liver, brain, bones and lungs.

DETECTION OF BREAST CANCER

Early detection of lumps in the breast is very important. It is always better to have uncertain lumps checked by a medical professional. Detection procedures are done at a clinic and also at your own home.

- ✓ **Self- Breast Exam** (at home)
age 20 +, once a month after menstrual cycle or same date monthly
- ✓ **Mammogram** (by health professional)
age 40 +, once a year
- ✓ **Clinical Breast Exam** (by health professional)
age 20-39, once every 3 years
age 40 +, once a year

SELF BREAST EXAM PROCEDURES *



1. **Lying down:** Place a pillow under right shoulder. Put your right hand under head. Check entire breast area with finger pads of left hand. Use small circles & follow up an up- and-down pattern. Use light, medium and firm pressure. Gently squeeze nipple for any discharge. Repeat with left breast.



2. **Before a mirror:** Hands at side. Look at breasts for change in contour, shape and size. Check for puckering, dimpling or changes in skin texture. Repeat exam with hands on hips then above head.



3. **In the shower:** Put right hand under head. The wetness of the shower will make it easier to feel lumps. Check entire breast area with finger pads of left hand. Use small circles & follow an up-and-down pattern. Use light, medium and firm pressure. Gently squeeze nipple for any discharge. Repeat with left breast.

*Consult a health professional if any breast changes are found.

Nutrition Information

A healthy diet and exercise has been associated with a reduced breast cancer risk.



Consume less fat

Vegetarian sources of protein (beans)

Lower- fat animal products (chicken without skin, turkey, lean meat)

1 % skim or lactaid milk products

Less fried and fast foods

Achieve a healthy weight through exercise

Walk, bike and dance to music in your home!

Find a friend to join you!

Have active fun 30 minutes each day; it adds up!



Consume 8 – 10 servings of fruit and vegetables daily

Make your plate colorful with variety, especially dark yellows, oranges and deep greens... an orange with breakfast, apple for mid-morning snack, tossed salad and mixed fruit for lunch, raw vegetables for an afternoon snack, two types of vegetables for supper and a late – night banana add up to 10!

Eat 25- 35 grams of FIBER each day

Beans (black beans, garbanzo, lentils and split peas)

Whole grain cereals (oatmeal, bran) and breads

Vegetables (broccoli, spinach) and fruit (apple, orange)



Choose less processed foods

Go for fresh produce instead of canned and boxed food

Drink 6-8 cups of water daily

Feel refreshed!

Drink alcohol in moderation

