

Black Women and Breast Cancer

Knowledge is Power in Your Breast Health



Breast cancer is a major health concern for black women of all ages. Why?

Black women are more likely to develop a form of breast cancer that spreads quickly.

Black women are more likely to die from breast cancer than women from other ethnic groups.

African American women are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer at later stages of the disease and experience delays in treatment of two or more months after initial diagnosis. Long intervals between screenings, lack of timely follow-up of suspicious results, and delays in treatment after diagnosis likely contributes to the lower survival among black women.

Fear, mistrust of the healthcare system, belief in myths about cancer and lack of access to affordable healthcare following a breast cancer diagnosis can prevent a woman from taking action to manage her physical health.

Higher death rates among black women likely reflect a combination of factors, including differences in stage of cancer at diagnosis, comorbidities, obesity rates, tumor characteristics, as well as timely access to screening, diagnostic and treatment services.

Black women have twice the risk of Triple-Negative breast cancer, an aggressive type of the disease. We also have a higher risk of BRCA1 and BRCA2 genetic mutations that carry a higher risk of breast cancer.

These facts are putting a tremendous burden on black women, families and communities.

However, despite the statistics many black women are alive and well today because of early detection, diagnosis and treatment that can lead to great long-term results.

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There are steps you can take to manage and protect your breasts and your health that include:

- Getting annual physicals and performing your monthly breast self-examination increases the opportunity for early detection, diagnosis and treatment options.
- Be familiar with your breasts to detect any changes should they occur. Familiarize yourself with the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.
- There are many types of breast diseases and conditions. Not all physical changes in breasts result in a cancer diagnosis. However, any significant change in your breasts requires a medical follow up to be certain it is not cancer.
- Diagnosing breast cancer can only be achieved by utilizing diagnostic tools such as mammograms, MRI and ultra sound for women with dense breast tissue and biopsy.
- It is up to you to take the **upper hand** in your breast health!

YES, YOU CAN DO THIS!

BREAST SELF-EXAM [\(Video\)](#)



- ✓ **Check your breasts once a month.**
- ✓ **If you find a problem with your breasts, seek medical attention immediately.**
- ✓ **Your medical provider will check your breasts for abnormal changes and order tests as needed.**