

# LGBT Women and Breast Cancer



Breast cancer affects anyone with breast tissue, be they straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual woman or man in a same sex relationship. Breast cancer does not discriminate.

The incidence of breast cancer in gay, lesbian and bisexual women is the same as in straight women and so are the mortality rates for LGBT Black Americans.

Breast cancer incidences increase with age in all women. Research indicates that black LGBT women experience higher rates of breast cancer compared to heterosexual women. The barriers women generally face are accessing quality health care, alcohol consumption, giving birth later in life or never experiencing childbirth, obesity, other health issues and smoking. Black LGBT women may defer early detection and breast cancer screening due to discrimination, isolation, lack of insurance, the stigma, and stress associated with their relationships and sexual orientation.

It is important to know your family medical history and if there are genetic links to breast cancer. No matter what is your lifestyle, be pro-active in your breast health; do not ignore abnormal sign in your breasts or body that might indicate a problem that needs medical attention and follow-up.

For more information about breast cancer and LGBT concerns go to: <https://cancer-network.org/cancer-information/lesbians-and-cancer/lesbians-and-breast-cancer-risk/>

Check out the story of Ericka Hart, a young black LGBT woman diagnosed with breast cancer, "Faces of Strength": <http://www.ihartericka.com/>