



What Every Woman Needs to Know About Breast Cancer



NATIONAL
BREAST
CANCER
FOUNDATION, INC.®

Possible Early Signs of Breast Cancer

According to the National Cancer Institute, symptoms of breast cancer are not usually noticeable until the tumor grows and changes how the breast looks or feels.

COMMON CHANGES INCLUDE:

- A lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area.
- A change in the size or shape of the breast.
- Dimpling or puckering in the skin of the breast.
- A nipple turned inward into the breast.
- Discharge (fluid) from the nipple, especially if bloody or clear in consistency.
- Scaly, red, or swollen skin on the breast, nipple, or areola (the dark area of skin at the center of the breast).
- A rash or reddened area of the breast skin, with enlarged pores, giving the appearance of resembling an orange peel.



One in eight women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.



64% of breast cancer cases are diagnosed at a localized stage, for which the 5-year survival rate is 99%. This is good news! There are over 3.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States today.

Create a Plan for Early Detection

Women can be diagnosed with breast cancer at any age. This is why it is so important for you to schedule regular exams. Below you will find some general guidelines for breast cancer early detection methods. You should always consult with your doctor to create a screening schedule that is most appropriate for you.

EXAM	AGE	FREQUENCY
Breast Self-Awareness	18+	Regularly/Monthly
Well-Woman Exam	21+	Yearly
Mammogram	40+	Yearly

Discuss with your health care provider how often you should have breast exams. Women with a first-degree relative who has been diagnosed with breast cancer (parent, sibling, child) may need to begin mammography earlier and should consult their health care provider about the timing and frequency of exams.

To learn more about breast cancer risk factors, visit:

nbcf.org/breast-cancer-risk-factors

Some people inherit mutated versions of genes that increase the risk of developing breast cancer. To learn more, visit:

nbcf.org/breast-cancer-genetics

Breast Self-Awareness

When performing a breast self-exam, you can use any of the following patterns. Be sure to use the same pattern each time.



UP + DOWN



CIRCULAR



WEDGE

SHOWER TEST

- Place your right hand – palm flat – against the back of your head.
- With the fingertips of your left hand, press lightly, then firmly, against your entire right breast to feel for lumps.
- Switch hands and repeat the process, using your right hand to check your left breast.

MIRROR TEST

- Stand straight with hands on hips. Check in the mirror for any changes in breast texture, shape, size, nipple appearance, or unusual discharge.

LYING-DOWN TEST

- Lie down with a small pillow or folded towel under your left shoulder and left hand behind your head.
- Use your right hand to check your left breast and under your armpit using your “Shower Test” pattern.
- Move pillow under your right shoulder. Switch arm positions and repeat the process using your left hand to check your right breast.

Programs Offered by NBCF

For those facing breast cancer, and their loved ones, NBCF provides help across the bridge to hope.



Education and Outreach

Community ambassadors and volunteers connect people with breast health information, local medical services, and breast cancer support.

National Mammography Program

We partner with medical facilities across the U.S. to provide free mammograms and diagnostic breast care services to underserved women.

Patient Navigator Program

Our patient navigators help patients overcome the barriers of cost, fear, and misinformation by helping underserved women to navigate the health care system.

Support Services

We provide emotional support, guidance, and resources for patients and survivors at every step—whether they're newly diagnosed, facing a terminal diagnosis, or experiencing breast cancer alone.

National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.®

Our mission is to provide help and inspire hope to those affected by breast cancer through early detection, education, and support services.

Join the Fight Against Breast Cancer

At NBCF we are Helping Women Now®. We provide mammograms and other breast health services to underserved women and promote early detection through our educational programs.

WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- Donate
- Fundraise
- Become a Community Ambassador
- Volunteer

Your contribution to NBCF is always appreciated.

National Breast Cancer Foundation was founded by Janelle and Neal Hail in 1991 to provide women of every age and walk of life reliable information about breast cancer, treatment options, heartfelt emotional support, and free diagnostic services for those in need.

JANELLE HAIL *Co-founder & CEO*



For more information, visit nbcf.org