

Breast cancer is a disease that women must take seriously. This year more than 315,000 women will find out for the first time they have the disease and another 42,170 will die from it. It has been medically proven that early detection can minimize the effects of this deadly disease and that more than 90 percent of breast cancer victims can survive if treatment is started early enough.

To catch it early, women are encouraged to practice breast self-examination and have regular mammograms. If you don't have insurance, or can't afford a mammogram, the Pennsylvania Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (PA-BCCEDP) can help eligible low-income women receive cancer screenings. The PA-BCCEDP was formally known as the Healthy Woman Program and offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings such as mammograms, MRI's, Pap and HPV tests as well as follow-up tests for an abnormal screening result. Call toll-free 1-800-215-7494 or visit [pa.gov/services/health/apply-for-breast-and-cervical-cancer-prevention-program](http://pa.gov/services/health/apply-for-breast-and-cervical-cancer-prevention-program) to find out more information.

Pennsylvania has stepped up its commitment to help women in their fight against breast cancer by enacting a law that requires health insurance companies to provide inpatient care for women following a mastectomy. The law also mandates that these companies cover the cost of prosthetic devices and reconstructive surgery needed after a mastectomy.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION on breast cancer

**American Cancer Society**  
1-800-227-2345  
[cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

**Susan G. Komen Breast  
Cancer Foundation**  
[komen.org](http://komen.org)  
1-877-GOKOMEN (465-6636)

**National Breast Cancer Coalition**  
1-800-622-2838  
[stopbreastcancer.org](http://stopbreastcancer.org)

**Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition**  
1-800-377-8828  
[pabreastcancer.org](http://pabreastcancer.org)

**Pennsylvania Department of Health**  
1-877-PA-HEALTH (724-3258)  
[pa.gov/agencies/health](http://pa.gov/agencies/health)

For sites anywhere in Pennsylvania  
offering free or discounted cancer  
screening, contact  
National Cancer Institute at  
**1-800-4-CANCER** or **1-800-422-6237**

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# AWARENESS



## ABOUT breast cancer

In the United States, the second leading cause of cancer death in women is breast cancer, followed by lung cancer. While lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for women, breast cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosis and is the second leading cause of cancer mortality, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Women can get breast cancer at any age, but the risk increases as a person grows older. Approximately eighty percent of Pennsylvania cases occur at age 50 or over.

Family history of breast cancer increases risk, but most women who develop breast cancer have no family history of the disease.

## E A R L Y detection

Early detection can improve survival. Breast cancer can be detected early through a three-step process:

### REGULAR MAMMOGRAMS

Regular mammograms should begin at age 40. Women age 45 to 54 should have a yearly mammogram. Whereas, women age 55 and older should have one every two years as directed by your physician.

### CLINICAL BREAST EXAMS

See your doctor for breast exams on a regular basis, at least every three years from age 20 to 39, and every year thereafter.



### MONTHLY BREAST SELF-EXAMS

Learn the proper way to do a thorough breast self-exam and practice it monthly. If you do detect a lump in your breast or notice any changes, contact your physician. Most lumps are not cancerous, but you should have a health professional check to be sure.

## WHAT IS A mammogram?

A mammogram is a safe, painless procedure that involves an X-ray of the breast. It can detect breast cancer up to two years before a lump can be felt either through self-examination or by a physician.

The level of radiation exposure from mammography equipment is very small. It is far more dangerous to allow breast cancer to go undetected than to be exposed to the very low dose of radiation.

The exam takes about 15 minutes. A trained technician positions the breast between two plastic plates. Some pressure is applied briefly to get a clear picture of the breast. A radiologist will then read the mammogram to determine if there are any suspicious areas.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women undergo their first mammogram at age 40.



**MAKE AN  
APPOINTMENT**  
for a  
breast cancer  
screening  
today!