



## Breast Health

### Early detection is the best protection.

- ◆ Breast cancer is the number one cancer diagnosed and the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women.
- ◆ A woman has a one in eight chance of developing breast cancer sometime during her life.
- ◆ When breast cancer is found and treated early, the five-year survival rate is 98 percent.

### How can breast cancer be found early?

- ◆ Getting regular screening tests such as a mammogram can help find breast cancer early when it's easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms.
- ◆ A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast. It's used to look for changes in the breast that might be breast cancer.
- ◆ At this time, a mammogram is the best way to find breast cancer for most women.

### What are the risk factors for breast cancer?

All women are at risk of developing breast cancer. However, certain factors are known to increase a woman's chance of developing breast cancer. These risk factors include:

- ◆ Being older than 50
- ◆ Having a personal or family history of breast cancer
- ◆ Genetic mutation of the genes BRCA 1 and 2
- ◆ Taking hormone replacement therapy for more than five years
- ◆ Having dense breasts

Although breast cancer is more common in older women, younger women also can get breast cancer, and men can get it as well.

## Be aware of any breast changes.

Know how your breasts normally look and feel and talk to your health care provider if you notice any of these signs or symptoms.

- ◆ Changes in skin color and/or texture such as redness, rash or orange peel appearance
- ◆ Changes in size or shape of your breast including swelling, dimpling or puckering
- ◆ Change in the appearance of your nipple including a nipple that is turning inward when it is normally pointed outward, or a nipple that is scaly, itchy or cracked
- ◆ Nipple discharge that starts suddenly
- ◆ Lump, hard knot or thickening in or near your breast or in your underarm area
- ◆ New pain in one spot that doesn't go away

## How can I reduce my risk of breast cancer?

Many factors over the course of your lifetime can influence your breast cancer risk. You can't change some factors, such as getting older or your family history, but you can help lower your risk of breast cancer by taking care of your health in the following ways:

- ◆ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ◆ Add exercise into your routine.
- ◆ Do not smoke or use tobacco.
- ◆ Limit alcohol intake.
- ◆ Limit postmenopausal hormone use.
- ◆ Breastfeed, if you can.

## What do I do if I cannot afford to pay for a mammogram?

- ◆ *Women's Way* may provide a way to pay for mammograms. Call 1-800-449-6636 or 701-328-2367 or visit [www.ndhealth.gov/womensway](http://www.ndhealth.gov/womensway) to see if you are eligible.

Talk to your health care provider about when to begin breast cancer screenings and how often is right for you.

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