



BREAST CANCER FACT SHEET

What is Breast Cancer?

Breast Cancer is a disease in which cancer cells form in the tissue of the breast. About 70 percent of all breast cancer begins in the ducts (which brings milk to the nipple) and 10 percent begins in the lobule (where milk is made).



Risk Factors

No one knows the exact cause of breast cancer. Bumping, bruising, or touching the breast does not cause cancer. The following are some of most significant risk factors for developing breast cancer.

- **Family History**
- **No Children**
- **Early Menstruation**
- **Age**
- **Diet and lifestyle choices**

Having a risk factor for cancer means that a person is more likely to develop the disease, however it does not mean that this person will get cancer. If there are any concerns, please discuss with the doctor.

Symptoms

Common symptoms of breast cancer include:

- **Change in how the breast and nipple feels and looks**
- **Nipple discharge (fluid)**

Prevention / Early Detection

The goal of screening exams for early breast cancer detection is to find cancers before they start to cause symptoms. Screening tests include:

- **Breast self-exams (BSE):** Monthly breast self exams to check for lumps or for any changes in the breast.
- **Clinical breast exams (CBE):** The doctor checks the breast for lumps or abnormalities. These checks are often part of the regular physical exam.
- **Mammograms:** Mammograms are x-rays of the breast and can detect breast lumps before they can be felt and can detect early signs of cancer. Mammograms, however, can miss cancer or find changes in the breast that are not cancer.

Breast Cancer Screening Guidelines

If you are in your 20's and 30's:

- **Clinical breast exam (CBE) every 3 years**
- **Breast self-exam monthly**

If you are in your 40's and above:

- **Clinical breast exam (CBE) every year**
- **Breast self-exam (BSE) monthly**
- **Mammograms (x-rays) every year**

Diagnosis and Treatment

If there are any symptoms or test result that suggests cancer, the doctor will try to determine the cause. A **biopsy** may be needed to look for cancer cells. A **biopsy** is when fluid or tissue is removed from the breast to help find out if there is cancer.

Women with breast cancer have many treatment options.

- **Surgery** is the most common treatment for cancer, there are several types of surgery:
 - **Lumpectomy** is removing only the breast lump and some tissue around it.
 - **Mastectomy** is when the entire breast is removed.
- **Radiation therapy** uses high energy x-rays to kill cancer cells.
- **Chemotherapy** is the use of cancer-killing drugs injected into a vein or taken as a pill.
- **Hormone therapy** is a cancer treatment that stops cancer cells from growing.

Conclusion

Every woman has a chance of getting breast cancer and it is the leading cause of death for Asian American women. However, with early detection, breast cancer can be treated successfully. Follow the screening guidelines and talk to your health care provider on what is best for you!

Remember early detection save lives!

For more information of our cancer screening program, please call **240-777-1409** or visit our website at **www.AAHInfo.org**.

Sources

Asian Breast Health, American Cancer Society National Cancer Institute, Intercultural Cancer Council, University of Southern California.