



Healthy Living Series

BREAST CANCER

What is Breast Cancer?

- Breast cancer is a disease in which cells in the breast grow out of control.
- It's the 2nd most common cancer among women in the US, but it can also affect men.
- There are several types of breast cancer.

Symptoms

- Most breast cancers are identified through a mammogram before showing symptoms.
- If breast lumps, spontaneous nipple discharge, or change in shape/size or skin of the breast is seen, you should seek evaluation.

Risk Factors

- **Gender:** Breast cancer occurs nearly 100 times more often in women (1 in 8) than men (1 in 800).
- **Age:** Most women are diagnosed after age 50. The average age of diagnosis is 62.
- **Race:** Black women have a higher death rate than other races.
- **Family History:** Those with a first-degree relative with breast cancer are nearly twice as likely to develop it themselves.
- **Genetics:** Inheriting gene mutations such as BRCA1 and BRCA2 put women at higher risk.
- **Lifestyle:** Lack of physical activity, poor diet, being overweight, and alcohol use increase the risk of developing breast cancer.

Screening & Prevention

- Early detection is key. The 5-year relative survival rate for cancer diagnosed at the localized stage is 99%.
- Schedule a regular mammogram. Depending on your age and risk factors, your healthcare provider will recommend when to start getting mammograms and how often you need them. Most women over age 40 will need to get one every 1-2 years.
- Learn how to do a breast self-exam to check for any changes, such as a new lump or skin changes.
- Reduce your risk of developing breast cancer with lifestyle changes: exercise, maintain a healthy weight, avoid/reduce alcohol.

Treatment

- Treatment options include surgery, chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, biological therapy, and radiation therapy.
- Treatment varies based on the type of cancer and how far it has spread.