

Join THE fight



THINK *Pink*



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BREAST CANCER

The term “breast cancer” does not describe a single type of cancer, but rather several forms of a disease that can develop in areas of the breast. The American Cancer Society says breast cancer type is determined by the specific cells in the breast that become cancerous.

There are many different types of breast cancer, and the medical community’s understanding of the disease is based on decades of research and millions of patients treated.

Twenty-three years ago, Dr. Charles Perou first classified breast cancer into subtypes based on genomic patterns. The Breast Cancer Research Foundation says breast cancer is broadly divided into two types: non-invasive breast cancers and invasive breast cancers.

Non-invasive breast cancers are called Stage 0 breast cancers or carcinomas in situ. These are thought to be the precursors to breast cancer, says the BCRF. While non-invasive breast cancers are not initially life-threatening, if left untreated, they can develop into invasive breast cancers, which can be fatal.

Here is a look at some of the different types of breast cancer.

Invasive ductal carcinoma

This is the most common type of breast cancer, advises the National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.

Invasive ductal carcinoma accounts for 70 to 80 percent of all breast cancer diagnoses in women and men. This



There are several different types of breast cancer from invasive ductal carcinoma – the most common type, to metastatic – which originates in the breast but has spread to another part of the body.

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cancer forms in the milk ducts and spreads beyond.

Invasive lobular carcinoma

This is the second most common type of breast cancer, accounting for 10 to 15 percent of diagnoses, says the BCRF. Invasive lobular carcinoma originates in the milk-producing glands of the breast

known as lobules.

Tumors that form due to invasive lobular carcinoma more commonly grow in lines in the breast rather than in lumps, so they present differently on a mammogram.

Inflammatory breast cancer

Inflammatory breast cancer is a rare,

fast-growing type of breast cancer. The inflammatory name comes from the appearance of the skin of the breast.

It looks red and inflamed, which is caused by breast cancer cells blocking lymph channels in the breast and skin, says Breast Cancer Now, a research and support charity.

Tripe-negative breast cancer

The NBCF says a diagnosis of triple-negative breast cancer means the three most common types of receptors known to cause most breast cancer growths are not present in the cancer tumor. These receptors are estrogen, progesterone and the HER2/neu gene.

Since the tumor cells lack necessary receptors, certain treatments like hormone therapy and drugs that target these receptors are ineffective. Chemotherapy is still an option.

Metastatic breast cancer

This type of breast cancer is also known as Stage IV breast cancer. Metastatic breast cancer originates in an area of the breast, but spreads (metastasizes) to another part of the body, most commonly the bones, lungs, brain, or liver, indicates BreastCancer.org.

Individuals hoping to learn more about breast cancer should be aware that there are various types of the disease. Which type an individual has is an important variable doctors consider as they plan a course of treatment.

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Noteworthy statistics related to breast cancer

Breast cancer affects millions of women and their family and friends every year. Each of those women has their own unique experience upon receiving a breast cancer diagnosis, and those journeys hopefully end with successful treatment.

Because each woman's breast cancer journey is unique, data regarding the disease only tells part of the story. But recognition of key breast cancer statistics is still important, as data can compel support for women fighting the disease and underscore how vital it is for young women to prioritize breast health.

- A recent study from the American Cancer Society found that roughly 42 percent of cancer diagnoses and 45 percent of cancer deaths in the United States are linked to controllable risk factors for the disease. Breast cancer is no exception in that regard, as the Breast Cancer Coalition Foundation points to studies that have shown as many as 50 to 70 percent of breast cancers can be prevented if women adopt lifestyle changes early enough.

- The ACS estimates that approximately 30 percent of postmenopausal breast

cancer diagnoses are linked to modifiable risk factors such as diet and physical activity levels.

- Five-year survival rates indicate that treatment is most effective when breast cancer is caught in its earliest stages. Data from the American Cancer Society indicates a 99 percent five-year survival rate for cancer discovered before it has spread beyond the place it started.

When the cancer is considered regional, which the National Cancer Institute defines as cancer that has spread to nearby lymph nodes, tissues or organs, the five-year survival rate is 86 percent. The five-year survival rate for distant cancer, which indicates it has spread to distant parts of the body, is 30 percent.

- Survival rates differ considerably between black women and white women diagnosed with breast cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, the five-year survival rate for black women during a recent six-year period of time was 83 percent compared to 92 percent for white women during that same period.

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Recognition of key breast cancer statistics is important, as data can compel support for women fighting the disease and underscore how vital it is for young women to prioritize breast health.

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The benefits of breast cancer support groups

Millions of women across the globe are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. According to the World Cancer Research Fund International, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women each year, with nearly three million new cases confirmed every 12 months.

Those figures are undoubtedly daunting, but they also tell a different story of perseverance and survival that can comfort women who have recently received a breast cancer diagnosis.

According to the WCRF, recent statistics revealed there were 7.8 million women worldwide who had lived for at least five years after their breast cancer diagnosis. Indeed, survival rates for breast cancer have improved dramatically in recent decades.

Women often overcome the disease on account of their own personal resilience, but also by drawing on the experiences of others for inspiration and strength, namely through support groups.

Those recently diagnosed with breast cancer may be surprised to learn just how beneficial support groups can be.

Support groups can help with mental challenges

A study published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* examined the effectiveness of support groups for women

with breast cancer and their caregivers.

The study found that participation in a support group can help to reduce feelings of depression, anxiety and more while also making women more capable of adapting to their situation.

Participation during treatment can have a lasting effect

A longitudinal study published in the journal *Psycho-Oncology* found that social support of breast cancer patients was positively predictive of better physical and mental health-related quality of life at three-year follow-up appointments for breast cancer patients.

That means the benefits of joining a breast cancer support group are not only evident during treatment but endure long after treatment as well.

They can be informative on multiple levels

Breastcancer.org notes that participation in a support group can teach women diagnosed with the disease how to become better advocates for themselves.

That's a notable benefit, as women confronting the mental health side effects of cancer treatment, including depression and anxiety, may feel as though they lack agency. In addition, by listening to others in a



Women recently diagnosed with breast cancer can find many benefits from participating in support groups. They may include learning more about the disease and how to become better advocates for themselves and support for the mental challenges that come with diagnosis.

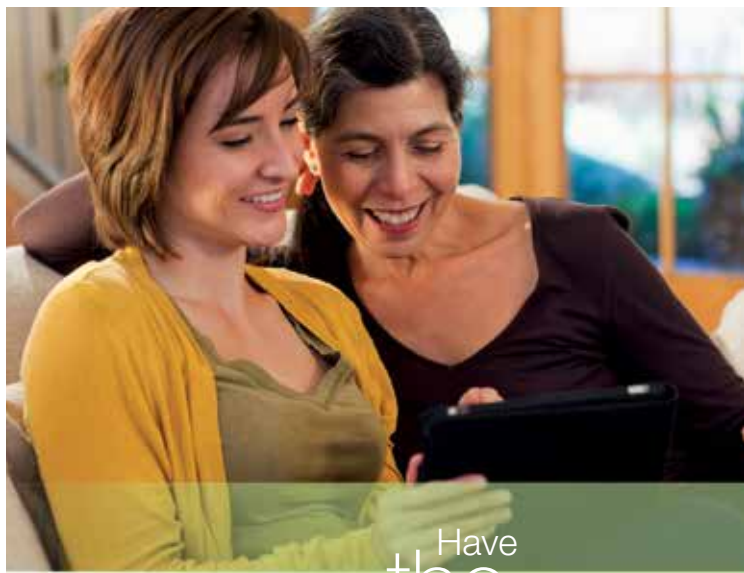
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support group, women can identify new resources for understanding their disease and treatment plan.

Support groups can be invaluable for

women diagnosed with breast cancer. Women are encouraged to speak with their cancer care team for available options.

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Have the Talk of a LifetimeSM

You talk about many things with your loved ones. Breast Cancer Awareness should be one of them. Make it a habit of doing monthly self exams to detect any changes, schedule mammograms as prescribed by your physician. Early detection will give you the best prognosis for a successful treatment of cancer. Don't let your life be cut short; be proactive. Your family needs your presence in their lives. We at Daniels Family Funeral Homes & Browns Lake Crematory are proud to support research toward finding a cure for breast cancer.

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Debunking certain **myths** surrounding breast cancer

Events like National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Susan G. Komen MORE THAN PINK Walk have been integral to raising awareness about the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women across the globe.

Though such campaigns and events have helped many women better understand breast cancer and their own risk for the disease, certain myths surrounding breast cancer persist.

Such myths are not harmless and can, in fact, lead to unsafe outcomes that jeopardize women's health.

Questions about breast cancer should always be directed to a physician. Though physicians may not have all the answers, they remain useful allies in the fight against a disease that the World Cancer Research Fund International reports will be discovered in roughly three million women this year.

As women seek more knowledge of breast cancer, it can be just as important to recognize some common myths surrounding the disease.

Myth: MRIs are more effective than mammograms

The National Breast Cancer Coalition notes that no evidence exists to support the assertion that a magnetic resonance imaging exam is a more effective screening test for breast cancer than a mammogram.

The coalition acknowledges that an MRI can be an effective diagnostic tool when doctors suspect something is wrong. However, it advises against using MRI to screen for breast cancer since it is more likely to yield a false-positive result than a mammogram.

Indeed, the National Breast Cancer



As women seek more knowledge of breast cancer, it can be important to recognize some common myths surrounding the disease because they can lead to unsafe outcomes that jeopardize women's health.

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Foundation identifies mammography as the gold standard for the early detection of breast cancer.

Myth: Breast size and breast cancer risk are connected

This myth typically suggests breast cancer is more common in women with large breasts. According to the foundation, there is no connection between breast size and breast cancer risk. Breast density, not size, may be associated with a greater risk for breast cancer.

The Mayo Clinic notes dense breast tissue refers to the ways breast tissue appears on a mammogram. Women with dense breasts, which the National Cancer Institute notes affects roughly half of all

women over age 40, are at higher risk for breast cancer because the dense tissue makes screening for the disease more difficult. But breast size and breast density are not one and the same.

Myth: Most breast cancer patients have a family history of the disease

The coalition notes that roughly 15 to 20 percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer report a family history of the disease. Assuming only those with a family history are vulnerable to breast cancer gives women with no such background a false sense of security, which may discourage them from taking measures to lower their risk.

Myth: All breast lumps are cancerous

According to the foundation, only a small percentage of breast lumps end up being cancerous. Lumps should never be ignored and should be reported to a physician immediately. But it's important to avoid jumping to conclusions after finding a breast lump.

A clinical breast exam can determine what's behind the lump, and women who discover a lump should remain calm until such an exam is conducted.

These are just some of the many myths circulating about breast cancer. More information about the disease can be found at nationalbreastcancer.org.

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What young women should know about breast cancer

A prevailing myth concerning breast cancer is that it only affects older women. Various medical organizations and institutions recommend women begin receiving mammograms starting at age 40, which may compel women younger than 40 to think that they are immune to breast cancer.

Yale Medicine notes breast cancer in younger individuals is rare, but the organization reports it is the most common cancer among women between the ages of 15 and 39. In addition, a body of evidence points to a growing rate of breast cancer diagnoses in younger women.

The Cleveland Clinic says breast cancer in young women and people assigned female at birth is known as early-onset breast cancer. Even adolescents and young adults can get breast cancer.

Although young people can get any form of breast cancer, invasive ductal carcinoma and triple-negative breast cancer are the most common forms of the disease among young women.

Diagnoses of breast cancer have steadily risen in women under age 50 over the last 20 years, says the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Researchers believe the surge is largely driven by increases in the number of women diagnosed with estrogen-receptor positive tumors, which are estrogen-fueled by estrogen.

The researchers also found higher rates



A prevailing myth concerning breast cancer is that it only affects older women. But medical experts report it's the most common cancer among women between 15 and 39 years old.

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of breast cancer among Black women, particularly those between the ages of 20 and 29. Black women in this age group were found to have a 53 percent increased risk of breast cancer.

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation says that breast cancers in women under age 40 are more likely to have features

that contribute to poorer outcomes and prognoses. Larger tumor size, advanced tumor stage, negative hormone receptor status, and an over-expression of the HER2 protein are some such features. The foundation also reports younger women are more likely to experience a recurrence at five and 10 years after therapy compared

to older women.

It is essential for younger women to be in tune with their bodies and learn to recognize any signs that may be indicative of breast cancer.

Since annual screenings are not often part of preventative health plans for women younger than 40, adolescents and young adults need to alert their doctors if they suspect anything is wrong. Unfortunately, by the time a tumor in the breast can be felt, it likely has been present for some time already.

Symptoms of breast cancer may include the following:

- Inverted nipple
- Breast lump or a lump in armpit
- Breast pain
- Changes in the skin of the breast
- Nipple discharge with or without pain
- Swollen lymph nodes

Any of these signs should be discussed with a primary care physician or a gynecologist.

Younger patients also are more likely to have a genetic connection to breast cancer. Individuals with one or more family members who were diagnosed with breast cancer are at higher risk and may want to consider screening at earlier ages.

Breast cancer is not a disease that only affects women 40 and older. Younger people can get breast cancer, and it's often a surprise and sometimes more aggressive.

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HOW BREAST CANCER CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH

Breast cancer is often viewed through the lens of the physical challenges the disease poses. Women undergoing breast cancer treatment often confront fatigue, and many deal with physical changes to their bodies, some of which may be permanent.

Though the physical challenges associated with breast cancer are significant, the disease also can take a toll on women's mental health.

Each woman's experience with breast cancer is unique. However, women with breast cancer may confront many of the same mental health challenges that others before them have dealt with.

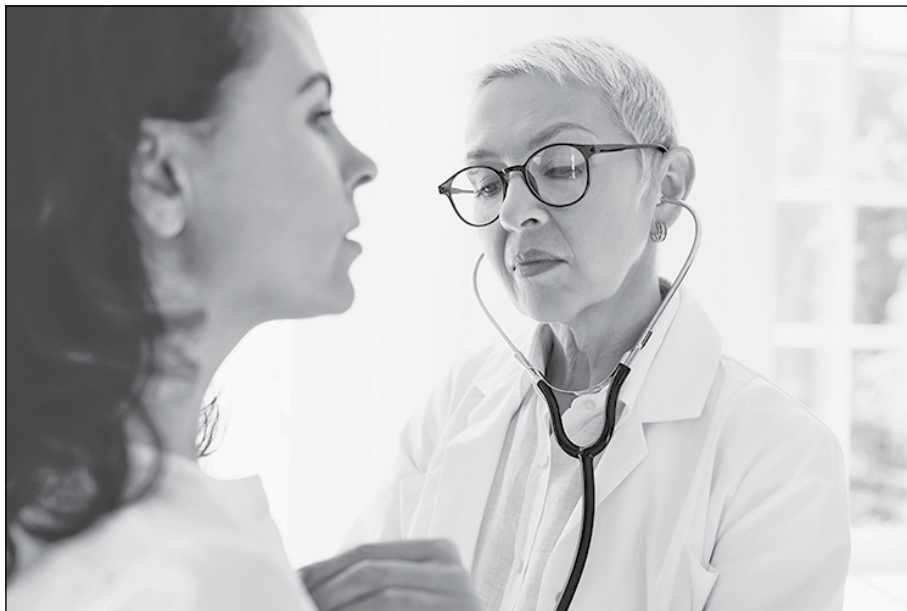
Recognition of the effects a breast cancer diagnosis can have on mental health is vital as women work to overcome their disease and go on to live long, healthy lives.

DEPRESSION

The American Cancer Society reports that roughly one in four people diagnosed with breast cancer experience depression.

Breastcancer.org notes that symptoms of depression include feelings of intense sadness; loss of interest in activities once enjoyed; feelings of extreme irritability or restlessness; isolating oneself or being unable to accept help; and lack of motivation to perform daily activities, among others.

According to breastcancer.org, women diagnosed with metastatic or triple-negative breast cancer might be more likely to experience depression than those informed they have other forms of the



The physical challenges associated with breast cancer are significant, but the disease also can take a toll on women's mental health in several ways.

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disease. Women who experience early menopause brought on by breast cancer treatments and those concerned about infertility also may be more likely to develop depression.

ANXIETY

The organization Living Beyond Breast Cancer notes more than 40 percent of people diagnosed with breast cancer experience anxiety. Anxiety brought on by

a breast cancer diagnosis can be triggered at any time, including upon learning one has the disease, during treatment and even after treatment has concluded.

Anxiety levels may increase while waiting for test results, anticipating the start of treatment and even during follow-up treatments. Feelings of being worried all the time; worries shifting from one problem to another; restlessness; difficulty concentrating; and difficulty

falling or staying asleep are some common symptoms of anxiety, according to Living Beyond Breast Cancer.

MEMORY LOSS

Breast Cancer Now reports that women may feel more forgetful during and after breast cancer treatment, noting this is often referred to as "chemo brain" or "brain fog." Even women who are not receiving chemotherapy as part of their breast cancer treatment can experience memory loss, but the cause is a mystery.

The fatigue and difficulty sleeping many women experience during breast cancer treatment may contribute to memory loss. Breast Cancer Now notes keeping a diary, writing things down and planning ahead are some ways to overcome the memory loss associated with breast cancer.

ADDICTION

According to breastcancer.org, some of the medicines prescribed during breast cancer treatment can be addictive. For example, opioids to treat pain and additional prescription medications to address anxiety, which can include Xanax and Valium, can be addictive.

Taking only prescribed doses can reduce the likelihood of addiction.

Women undergoing treatment for breast cancer may experience various side effects that affect their mental health. They are urged to speak openly with their physicians and request help combating any mental health complications that arise before, during and after treatment.

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ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE USE AND BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer may never be far from the minds of women, particularly those who have experience with the disease.

Naturally, women want to do all they can to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer. While it is not possible for women to eliminate their breast cancer risk, recognition of certain variables that can increase risk can help them make more informed decisions. Such variables include the link between breast cancer and hormonal oral contraceptives.

Oral contraceptives are used by women to prevent pregnancy. The organization Susan G. Komen says that use of oral contraceptives is linked to a 20 to 30 percent increased risk for breast cancer. However, nearly all of the research on the link between the two comes from observational studies, including both large prospective cohort studies and population-based case-control studies, indicates the National Cancer Center.

Researchers cannot definitively say if oral contraceptives cause or prevent cancer.

A cohort study published in the New England Journal of Medicine analyzed the risk of invasive breast cancer in Dutch women who used hormonal contraceptives. The study found that the overall risk of breast cancer from contraceptive use was very low.

Oral contraceptives utilize different hormone combinations and strengths, so results may vary depending on the type of pill being taken.

Once women stop taking birth control pills, their risk for breast cancer begins to decrease, advises Susan G. Komen. After about five years, the risk of breast cancer among women who have taken an oral contraceptive is similar to the risk among women who have never taken the pill at all.

Low-dose pills also may be linked to an increased breast cancer risk just like older, higher-dose forms of birth control. But Susan G. Komen says that the progestin-only "mini-pill," norethisterone, doesn't appear to be linked to breast cancer.

So those who are considering birth control pills may want to speak to their doctors about norethisterone if breast cancer risk is a concern. Similarly, use of a hormonal IUD, a vaginal birth control ring or a birth control patch does not seem to be linked to breast cancer.

Although there is a relatively low risk of breast cancer attributed to use of hormonal birth control, women can conduct their own research so they are in the best position to make informed decisions they can be comfortable with going forward.

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What the different stages of breast cancer signify

Upon being diagnosed with breast cancer, women and their families are presented with a wealth of information regarding the disease. Some of that information is unique to each patient, but much of it is based on decades of research and millions of successful treatments.

The American Cancer Society reports that cancer staging is a process during which doctors will attempt to determine if a cancer has spread and, if so, how far.

Breast cancer stages range from stage 0 to stage IV. Each stage signifies something different, and recognition of what each stage indicates can make it easier for women to understand their disease.

Stage 0

The Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center notes that when a woman is diagnosed with stage 0 breast cancer, that means abnormal cells are present but have not spread to nearby tissue.

The National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. indicates stage 0 breast cancer is the earliest stage of the disease and is highly treatable when detected early.

Indeed, the American Cancer Society reports a five-year survival rate of 99 percent among individuals diagnosed with stage 0 breast cancer.

Stage I

Stage I is still considered an early stage with breast cancer. The MSKCC notes a stage I diagnosis indicates tumor cells have spread to normal surrounding breast tissue but are still contained in a small area.

Stage I breast cancer may be characterized as stage IA, which indicates a tumor is about as large as a grape and cancer has not spread to the lymph nodes, or stage IB, which indicates the tumor may be slightly smaller but is accompanied by small clusters of cancer cells in the lymph nodes or there is no tumor and only the small clusters in the lymph nodes.

The ACS also reports a 99 percent five-year survival rate for patients diagnosed with stage I breast cancer.

Stage II

A stage II breast cancer diagnosis indicates the tumor is at least 20 millimeters (about the size of a stage IA tumor) and potentially as large as 50 millimeters. The tumor also can be larger than 50 millimeters if no lymph nodes are affected (stage IIB).

The ACS notes the size of the tumor may indicate if the cancer is stage IIA or stage IIB. The MSKCC notes that a stage IIA diagnosis could indicate there is no tumor or there is a tumor up to



Breast cancer stages, determined by doctors and based on whether the cancer has spread, range from stage 0 to stage IV. Recognition of what each stage indicates can make it easier for women to understand their disease.

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20 millimeters and the cancer has spread to the lymph nodes under the arm. A tumor determined to be between 20 and 50 millimeters that has not spread to the lymph nodes also indicates a stage IIA diagnosis. A stage IIB diagnosis indicates the tumor in the breast is between 20 and 50 millimeters and has spread to between one and three nearby lymph nodes.

According to Cancer Research UK, the five-year survival rate for stage II breast cancer is around 90 percent.

Stage III

Stage III breast cancer is considered regional, which the ACS reports notes had a roughly 86 percent survival rate during a recent six-year span. The MSKCC notes that a stage III diagnosis indicates the tumor is larger than 50 millimeters and has affected lymph nodes across a wider region than in less developed stages of the disease.

Cancers that have reached stage III may be categorized as stage IIIA, stage IIIB or stage IIIC. The American College of Surgeons reports that stage IIIA indicates a tumor of any size that has spread to between four and nine lymph

nodes or a tumor larger than five centimeters that has spread to between one and three lymph nodes.

Stage IIIB indicates any size tumor and that the cancer has spread to the chest wall. A stage IIIC diagnosis indicates the tumor can be any size and has spread to 10 or more lymph nodes.

Stage IV

Stage IV is the most advanced form of breast cancer. If the cancer has reached stage IV, that indicates the tumor can be any size and has spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body, potentially including organs and tissues.

The ACS reports that survival rate for this stage, which is considered distant, is 31 percent. However, the breast cancer advocacy organization Susan G. Komen notes that only around 6 percent of breast cancer diagnoses in women diagnosed for the first time have reached stage IV at the time of diagnosis.

Staging makes it easier to understand a breast cancer diagnosis. More information about breast cancer staging is available at mskcc.org and cancer.org.

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The role of surgery in breast cancer prevention

Breast cancer affects women in every corner of the globe. Although it is much more prevalent in women, men also can develop breast cancer because their bodies contain some breast tissue where the cancer takes root.

The World Health Organization says breast cancer was the most common cancer in women in 157 countries out of 185, according to recent statistics.

Roughly half of all breast cancers occur in women with no specific risk factors other than sex and age. As a result, the approach to breast cancer often is reactive rather than proactive.

However, for individuals with an elevated risk of breast cancer, namely a family history of breast cancer or an inherited genetic link, surgery might be considered as a proactive measure.

Surgery to reduce breast cancer risk goes by different names. Cleveland Clinic calls it a prophylactic mastectomy, and the Mayo Clinic refers to it as a preventative mastectomy while Macmillan Cancer Support in the United Kingdom calls it risk-reducing breast surgery.

No matter the name, the outcome is the same. A prophylactic (preventative) mastectomy is a surgery to remove one or both breasts, says the Cleveland Clinic.

This type of surgery may be recommended by health care providers for individuals with high risk of developing breast cancer, such as those who have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation.

Macmillan Cancer Support says this preventative surgery can lower the risk of getting breast cancer by roughly 95 percent for those who undergo bilateral mastectomy. It is not possible to remove all breast tissue, which is why there is still a small chance that breast cancer can develop even after surgery.

There are different types of preventative mastectomy surgeries. The bilateral (double) is the most extensive in that both breasts are removed. A contralateral mastectomy removes the healthy breast in people who have cancer in the other breast. A skin-sparing mastectomy removes the areola and nipple, then removes breast tissue through that small incision. A nipple-sparing mastectomy removes only the breast tissue without affecting the nipple or areola. Finally, a double mastectomy with reconstruction removes both breasts and then reconstructs them using tissue from elsewhere in the body or implants.

Brigham and Women's Hospital says health care experts can discuss the pros and cons of prophylactic surgery for those who are at high risk. Women who choose to proceed with the surgery will find oncologists typically work in conjunction with plastic surgeons to help patients achieve the best results with as few procedures as possible.

Typically, those who have undergone preventative mastectomy will not need further screening tests for breast cancer. However, it is still advisable to check the breast area regularly for any abnormalities due to the small amount of breast tissue that remains. The Cleveland Clinic says recovery time varies after the procedure, but it can be three to eight weeks if a breast reconstruction also has occurred. It may take several months before individuals can resume normal activities.

Preventative surgery is an option for those who have very high risk for breast cancer and want to reduce their risk of developing the disease.

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