

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



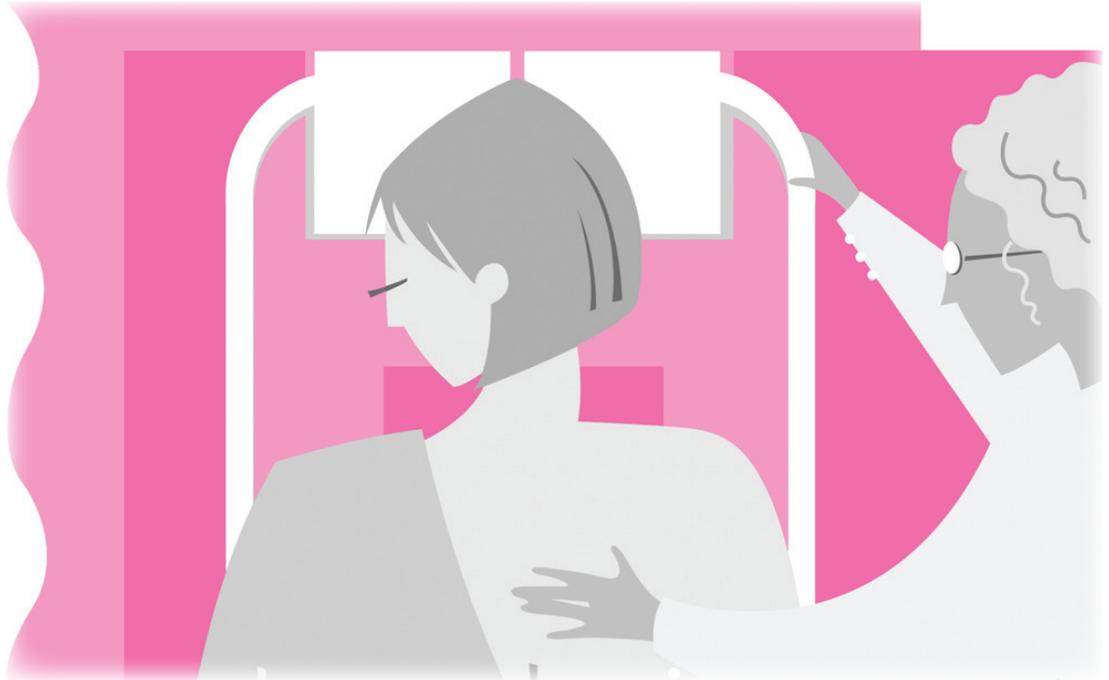
October, 2011

Facts About Breast Cancer

How does breast cancer begin?

Cells in the body normally divide (reproduce) only when new cells are needed. Sometimes, cells in a part of the body grow and divide out of control, which creates a mass of tissue called a tumor. If the cells that are growing out of control are normal cells, the tumor is called benign (not cancerous). If however, the cells that are growing out of control are abnormal and don't function like the body's normal cells, the tumor is called malignant (cancerous).

Cancers are named after the part of the body from which they originate. Breast cancer originates in the breast tissue. Like other cancers, breast



cancer can invade and grow into the tissue surrounding the breast. It can also travel to other parts of the body and form new tumors, a process called metastasis.

What Causes Breast Cancer?

It is not clear what causes breast cancer, although there are certain risk factors that may put you at higher risk of developing it. A person's age, genetic factors, personal health history, and diet all contribute to breast cancer risk.

Who Gets Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women, after skin cancer. Today, approximately 1 in almost every 8 women

(13.4%) will develop breast cancer in her lifetime. Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death in women after lung cancer -- and is the leading cause of cancer death among women ages 35 to 54.

Only 5% to 10% of breast cancers occur in women with a clearly defined genetic predisposition for the disease. The majority of breast cancer cases are "sporadic," meaning there is no direct family history of the disease. The risk for developing breast cancer increases as a woman ages.

What Are the Symptoms of Breast Cancer?

The symptoms of breast cancer in-



(Over)

Facts About Breast Cancer

(Continued)

clude:

- Lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm that persists through the menstrual cycle.
- A mass or lump, which may feel as small as a pea.
- A change in the size, shape, or contour of the breast.
- A blood-stained or clear fluid discharge from the nipple.

What Are the Types of Breast Cancer?

The most common types of breast cancer are:

- 1. Invasive ductal carcinoma .**
This cancer starts in the milk ducts of the breast. This is the most common form of breast cancer, accounting for 80% of invasive cases.
- 2. Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)** is ductal carcinoma in its earliest stage (Stage 0).
In situ refers to the fact that the cancer hasn't spread beyond its point of origin. If untreated, ductal carcinoma in situ may become invasive cancer. It is almost always curable.
- 3. Infiltrating (invasive) lobular carcinoma.** This cancer begins in the lobules of the breast where breast milk is produced, but has spread to surrounding tissues or the rest of the body. It accounts for about 10% of invasive breast cancers.
- 4. Lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS)** is cancer that is only in the lobules of the breast. It isn't a true cancer, but serves as a marker for the increased risk of developing breast cancer

Benefits Corner

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Don't forget to have your routine mammogram, the benefit that is available through CHP is based upon the HHS guidelines set forth in the HealthCare Reform Act. A routine mammogram that is coded as preventative will be covered at 100%, not subject to co-pay or deductible every 1 to 2 years for women over 40.

Flu Shots

It is that time of year for flu shots! Don't forget that the County Health Pool will reimburse 100% for flu shots up to the Reasonable and Customary Amount. If you do not have your flu shot at a provider's office, a claim form is available at www.ctsi.org under County Health Pool to submit with a bona fide receipt for reimbursement.

later, possibly in both breasts. Thus, it is important for women with lobular carcinoma in situ to have regular clinical breast exams and mammograms.

How Is Breast Cancer Diagnosed?

During your regular physical exam, your doctor will take a careful personal and family history and perform a breast exam and possibly one or more other tests:

- Mammography
- Ultrasonography

Based on the results of these tests, your doctor may or may not request a biopsy to get a sample of the breast mass cells or tissue.

Breast cancer diagnosis and treatment are best accomplished by a team of experts working together with the patient. Each patient needs to evaluate the advantages and limitations of each type of treatment, and work with her team of physicians to develop the best approach.

How Can I Protect Myself From Breast Cancer?

Follow these three steps for early breast cancer detection:

- Annual screening mammography starting at age 40 or 50. Breast cancer experts don't agree when women need to begin getting mammograms. Ask your doctor.
- Women in high-risk categories should have screening mammograms every year and typically start at an earlier age. MRI or ultrasound screening can also be given in addition to mammograms. Discuss the best approach with your doctor.
- Have your breast examined by a health care provider at least once every three years after age 20, and every year after age 40. Clinical breast exams can complement mammogram.

Source: www.webmd.com