

**For more information please visit:**

[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

[www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast)

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

<http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/>

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## What is Breast Cancer?



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### WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer is a disease where growths form inside a woman's breast and sometimes spread. Breast cancer is dangerous, but can be stopped with the right care. This brochure talks about how you can prevent breast cancer.

*In 2007, over 175,000 women in the United States were told that they have breast cancer.*

*In 2007, over 40,000 of those women died.*

### WHO IS AT RISK FOR BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer can happen to any woman, but you are more likely to get breast cancer if you are over 55 years old or are related to someone with a history of the disease.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF BREAST CANCER?

A breast does not have to hurt or look different to have breast cancer. However, there are some signs that you should look out for:

- a bump in the breast or armpit
- one part of your breast gets bigger or swells
- the skin on your breast hurts and is spotty
- liquids other than breast milk (such as blood) come out of the nipple
- the skin around the nipple is red or flaky
- pain in any area of the breast or nipple

These signs do not always mean you have cancer. However, to be safe it is very important to contact a doctor immediately.

### HOW CAN I PREVENT BREAST CANCER?

There are many different ways that you can make sure your breasts are cancer-free. You should try all of these exams to make sure you stay healthy:

#### Mammogram

A mammogram is when a machine safely takes a picture of the breast to see if there are changes inside it. If you are over 40 years of age, you should get a mammogram at least every two years.

#### Clinical Breast Exam

A clinical breast exam is when a doctor or nurse uses his or her hands to feel for bumps or any changes. If you are between the ages of 20 and 39, you should have this exam once every three years.

#### Self-Exam

A self-exam is when you use your own hands to feel for bumps or changes in the breast. It is important to first have a doctor or nurse show you the right way to feel your breast so you know what to feel for.

### WHY SHOULD I GET A BREAST CANCER EXAM?

The best way to prevent or manage breast cancer is to catch it early and get medical help. It is very important to find any bumps before

they spread. The more attention you give your breasts means a smaller possibility that anything could go wrong. It is good to see a doctor regularly to make sure that there are no abnormal changes in your breasts. It is also important to eat lots of fruits and vegetables and drink less alcohol. Having an active, healthy life lowers the risk of getting cancer.

### HOW CAN I GET A TEST IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY OR HEALTH INSURANCE?

There may be clinics in your area that give free breast cancer exams. To find these clinics and what services they offer, contact the Centers for Disease Control at 1 (800) 232-4636.