5 FACTS about breast cancer screening

1. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women worldwide, regardless of race or ethnicity. Men can also get breast cancer, although it is rare. Screening mammography reduces breast cancer deaths by 20%.

2. Breast cancer screening involves checking breasts for cancer before there are any signs or symptoms. The goal is to find the cancer early when it is easier to treat. The 5-year survival rate for localized breast cancer in women is 98.8%. Regular medical evaluations are advised to assess changes in your risk factors for breast cancer. These risk factors include a family history, genetic mutations, prior chest radiation, dense breasts, early menstruation, and being female.

3. Talk to your doctor to determine the best age for you to start getting a mammogram and how frequently you need mammograms, as this changes based on your age, health and risk factors for breast cancer. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends women age 40–74 at average risk for breast cancer get a mammogram every two years.

4. Be familiar with the way your breasts look and feel. If you notice any changes or feel a lump, contact your doctor right away (even if your recent mammogram was negative).

5. Most health insurance plans are required to cover mammograms every one to two years for women 40 years and older with no out-of-pocket costs (co-pay, deductible, or co-insurance). Call your insurance company to confirm your plan's coverage.

Being proactive can save your life so talk to your doctor today about breast cancer screening!

This health alert is brought to you by:

TPA THE PHYSICIAN ALLIANCE

Source: ChoosingWisely.org; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Cancer Society; U.S. Preventive Services Task Force; National Cancer Institute

These items are provided solely for informational purposes and are not intended as a substitute for consultation with a medical professional. Patients with any specific questions about the items on this list or their individual health should consult their physician. 2025.