

PREVENTION

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women and although one may have risk factors that one cannot control such as genetics, there are most definitely ways to help decrease the chances of getting breast cancer. Lifestyle choices such as getting regular exercise, not smoking, limiting alcohol intake, and maintaining a healthy weight all can lower the risk of developing breast cancer. Also, routine screening (mammograms) for breast cancer at age 40 can help decrease the chances of getting breast cancer (Mayo Clinic, 2018).

TREATMENT

Some treatment options that are available for treating breast cancer include a sentinel lymph node biopsy, radiation, chemotherapy, targeted drug therapy, and breast-conserving treatment such as a partial or segmental mastectomy (Foundation, 2020).



Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is a disease where malignant (cancer) cells are formed in the tissues of the breast. These cancer cells multiply quickly generating the growth of the tumors in the breast that develop slowly over time. More than 50% of breast cancer cases start in the milk ducts of the breast (Foundation, 2020).

RISK FACTORS

Individuals younger than the age of 45 have a greater risk of developing breast cancer if they have close relatives who were diagnosed with breast cancer before age 45, if themselves or a close relative was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at any age, or if you have received radiation therapy to the breast or chest during childhood or early adulthood (Risk factors for early breast cancer, CDC).

DIAGNOSIS/DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES

The first step to diagnosing breast cancer is to begin with a breast exam and then mammograms which are x-rays of the breast tissue that are used to screen for breast cancer. Breast ultrasounds, breast MRIs, and removing samples of breast cells for testing are all options to further diagnose breast cancer (Breast Cancer, 2025).

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- New lump in the breast or underarm
- Thickening or swelling of part of the breast
- Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or breast
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk (blood)
- Irritation or dimpling of breast skin
- Any change in the size or shape of the breast (Symptoms of breast cancer, CDC)

References:

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. (2018, November 13). *Mayo Clinic Minute: Can you prevent breast cancer? - mayo clinic news network*. Mayo Clinic. <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/mayo-clinic-minute-can-you-prevent-breast-cancer/>

Foundation, A. B. C. (2020, October 12). *Guide to breast cancer*. American Breast Cancer Foundation. https://www.abcf.org/about-breast-cancer/guide-to-breast-cancer/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=2063026949&gbraid=0AAAAADr4dk7Ek9g7ABXELi0Z9D1KWLpQk&gclid=Cj0KCQjw5JXFBhCrARIsAL1ckPu6JlOSyjZFNu3auTth8SEhVqY_0p5DcqDaDRUu6e29-TwWg5PRthcaAvTaEALw_wcB

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