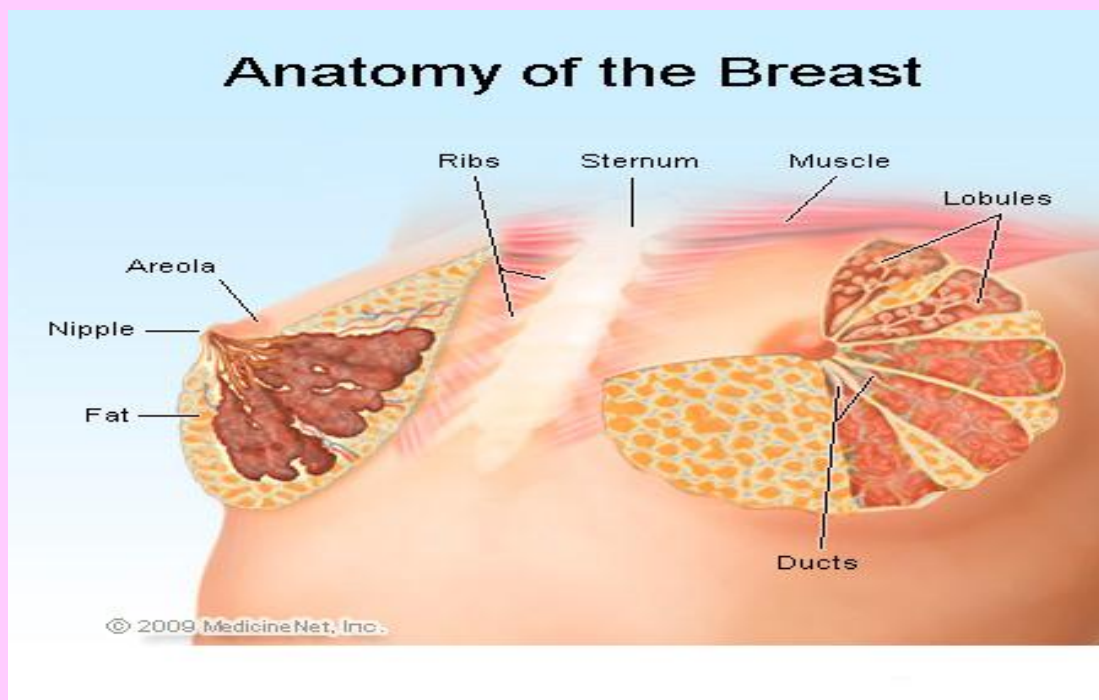


# Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is a cancer that starts in the tissues of the breast.

There are two main types of breast cancer:

- **Ductal carcinoma** starts in the tubes (ducts) that move milk from the breast to the nipple. Most breast cancers are of this type.
- **Lobular carcinoma** starts in the parts of the breast, called lobules, that produce milk.



## Causes, incidence, and risk factors

We have an increased risk for breast. Over the course of a lifetime, 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer.

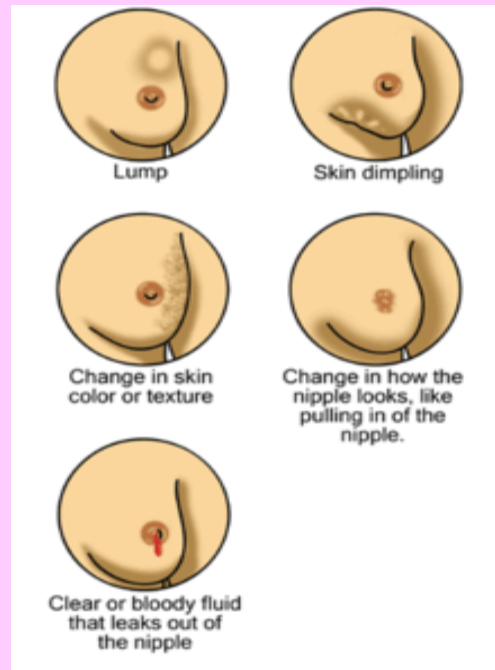
Risk factors you cannot change include:

- **Age and gender** -- Your risk of developing breast cancer increases as you get older. Most advanced breast cancer cases are found in women over age 50. Women are 100 times more likely to get breast cancer than men.
- **Family history of breast cancer** -- You may also have a higher risk for breast cancer if you have a close relative who has had breast, uterine, ovarian, or colon cancer. About 20 - 30% of women with breast cancer have a family history of the disease.
- **Genes** -- Some people have genes that make them more likely to develop breast cancer. The most common gene defects are found in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes. These genes normally produce proteins that protect you from cancer. If a parent passes you a defective gene, you have an increased risk for breast cancer. Women with one of these defects have up to an 80% chance of getting breast cancer sometime during their life.
- **Menstrual cycle** -- Women who got their periods early (before age 12) or went through menopause late (after age 55) have an increased risk for breast cancer.

## Other risk factors include:

**Alcohol use** -- Drinking more than 1 - 2 glasses of alcohol a day may increase your risk for breast cancer.

- **Childbirth** -- Women who have never had children or who had them only after age 30 have an increased risk for breast cancer. Being pregnant more than once or becoming pregnant at an early age reduces your risk of breast cancer.
- **DES** -- Women who took diethylstilbestrol (DES) to prevent miscarriage may have an increased risk of breast cancer after age 40.
- **Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)** -- You have a higher risk for breast cancer if you have received hormone replacement therapy with **estrogen** for several years or more. **Obesity** -- Obesity has been linked to breast cancer, although this link is controversial. The theory is that obese women produce more **estrogen**, which can fuel the development of breast cancer.
- **Radiation** -- If you received radiation therapy as a child or young adult to treat cancer of the chest area, you have a much higher risk for developing breast cancer. **Breast implants, using antiperspirants, and wearing underwire bras** do not raise your risk for breast cancer. There is no evidence of a direct link between breast cancer and pesticides.



Early breast cancer usually does not cause symptoms. This is why regular breast exams are important. As the cancer grows, symptoms may include:

- **Breast lump** or lump in the armpit that is hard, has uneven edges, and usually does not hurt
- **Change in the size**, shape, or feel of the breast or nipple -- for example, you may have redness, dimpling, or puckering that looks like the skin of an orange
- **Fluid coming from the nipple** -- may be bloody, clear to yellow, green, and look like pus
  
- Men can get breast cancer, too. Symptoms include breast lump and breast pain and tenderness.
- Symptoms of advanced breast cancer may include:
  - Bone pain
  - Breast pain or discomfort

- Skin ulcers
- Swelling of one arm (next to the breast with cancer)

## Breast Cancer Awareness Month



**Celebrate the 27th year of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

**Make Some Healthy Changes**



Take charge of some basic habits to lower your risk of breast cancer. Making these healthy changes will improve your overall health as well! Living healthier and longer is just another benefit of breast cancer awareness.

- [Upgrade Your Diet](#)
- [Get a Move On](#)
- [Drop a Few Pounds](#)
- [Clean Up Your Act](#)
- [Put Out The Fire](#)
- [Less Alcohol, Less Risk](#)

## Keep Your Dates



Your breast health is your responsibility. Set up regular dates to guard your breast health, and keep track of changes, screenings, and test results. Remember that early detection does save lives, and you are your own first line of defense. Being aware of your breast health is in your hands.

- [Do Your Monthly Breast Exam](#)
- [Schedule Your Mammogram](#)
- [Keep Up Your Health Records](#)
- [Health Screenings for Every Woman](#)

[Healthy Breasts All Your Life](#)

## Support the Cause



There are many ways to enjoy Breast Cancer Awareness Month. You can make a difference and support the cause while having a good time, getting some exercise, and writing a check. Choose to get involved with survivors and supporters – you'll be glad you did.

- [Raise Some Funds](#)
- [Take a Good Walk](#)
- [Be a Volunteer](#)
- [Smart Pink Shopping](#)
- [Donate Where It Counts The Most](#)
- [Think Pink, Gift Wisely](#)

### **Celebrate Super Survivors**



So many lives have been touched by breast cancer – you probably know several people that you could celebrate. Survival rates are on the rise, as detection and treatments improve. Let's appreciate these smart, tough, super survivors!

- [Life Lessons from Survivors](#)
- [Great Survivor Stories](#)
- [They Won, Cancer Lost](#)

### **Think Pink, Live Green**



Think Pink, Live Green is a way of living that aims to help women reduce their risk of breast cancer or the disease coming back in survivors. It's also a way for women living with advanced disease to make the healthiest choices possible

- *we encourage you to keep toxic chemicals and carcinogens out of the environment*
- *purchasing low-impact, earth-friendly products.*

**National Breast Cancer Awareness Month** is an annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities like the Pink Posse every October to increase awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure. The campaign also offers information and support to those affected by breast cancer.



