

## Breast Cancer and Mammography Myths & Facts

<b>Myth:</b>	<b>Facts:</b>
I don't have to worry about getting breast cancer. I don't have any of the risk factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just being a woman and getting older are the greatest risk factors for breast cancer.</li> <li>• Additional risk factors include: family history, early menarche, late menopause, late age at first pregnancy or no pregnancies, diet and alcohol consumption.</li> <li>• Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in women.</li> <li>• About 70% of women with breast cancer have no known risk factors.</li> <li>• In 2004 about 215,990 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and approximately 40,110 women will die from breast cancer.</li> </ul>
Now that I am in my fifties, I no longer have to worry about getting breast cancer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women don't outgrow the risk of breast cancer. As women get older, their risk of getting breast cancer actually increases.</li> <li>• More than 75% of breast cancers are found in women aged 50 and older.</li> </ul>
No one in my family has been diagnosed with breast cancer, so I won't get it either.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About 90% of the women who develop breast cancer have no family history of the disease.</li> <li>• Having one first-degree relative with breast cancer approximately doubles a woman's risk.</li> </ul>
If I get breast cancer, I'll die from it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mammogram can find breast cancer in its earliest stages, before it can be felt.</li> <li>• Ninety-seven out of 100 women will live for five years or more if their breast cancer is found at its earliest stage.</li> </ul>
I can't afford to have a mammogram.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have Medicare and are a woman aged 40 and older, Medicare will help pay for you to have a mammogram once every 12 months. The woman does not have to meet a deductible first.</li> <li>• Most insurance companies help pay for mammograms.</li> <li>• If a woman doesn't have health insurance, often the American Cancer Society can help recommend resources. Call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.</li> </ul>
Mammograms are unsafe and too painful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mammograms give only minimal exposure to radiation.</li> <li>• Some pressure on the breasts is needed during the mammogram in order to get a clear x-ray, but it only lasts a few minutes.</li> <li>• A woman can tell the mammography technician to decrease the pressure if it becomes too uncomfortable.</li> </ul>
I've had one mammogram; that's all I need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast cancer can occur at any time. That is why it is so important to get regular mammograms – not just one.</li> <li>• The American College of Radiology, the American Medical Association and the American Cancer Society recommend that women aged 40 and older have a mammogram every year.</li> <li>• When a woman has annual mammograms, her doctor can compare the x-rays from year to year. This makes it easier to find changes in the breasts and detect breast cancer in its earliest stages.</li> </ul>
All women have an equal risk of getting breast cancer and dying from it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are differences in rates of detection and survival outcomes between women of different races.</li> <li>• Although Caucasian women have a higher incidence of getting breast cancer, African American women with breast cancer are more likely to die from it.</li> <li>• Cancer is the leading cause of death for African American women aged 30-54.</li> <li>• African American women are 30% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.”</li> </ul>