



# Medicine Cabinet Alert!

Healthy Ways to Live your Days

October 2010

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ext 6415 and ext 6417  
(941) 741-2960

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## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Approximately 4% of women in their 60's are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. Although breast cancer can occur in men, most often, it is found in women. 40% of all women will discover a lump in their breast at some point in their lives. Thankfully, not all lumps are cancerous. In fact, about 4 out of 5 lumps are found to be benign (not cancer). However, it is important to tell your doctor about any changes that you notice so that the proper steps can be taken.

Detecting cancer early is key because it can then be treated more quickly, usually resulting in a better outcome for the patient. Some women who have breast cancer do not have a lump at all, so it's important to get yearly exams at the doctor's office as well as a yearly mammogram if over the age of 40 in order to monitor any changes. The exact cause of breast cancer is not known, there are certain risks that can increase a person's chances of developing the disease. Some of these risks are listed below:

<p><b>Personal History of Breast Cancer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women who have had breast cancer in one breast have an increased chance of developing it again in the same or other breast.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A woman's risk for developing breast cancer increases if her mother, sister, daughter, grandmother, or aunts have been diagnosed with the disease.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Age</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Race</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast cancer occurs more commonly in white women than it does in black, Hispanic, or Asian women.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Childbirth after 30 or No Childbirth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women who had their first child after the age of 30 have a greater risk than women who had children at a younger age. Not having children also increases the risk.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Not Breast-Feeding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The more months of breast-feeding, the lower the risk of developing breast cancer.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hormones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of estrogen-progesterone hormones after menopause for several years increases the risk of cancer. After 5 years of stopping these products, your risk returns to normal.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Excessive Weight and Alcohol</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overweight and drinking alcohol both increase the levels of estrogen in the body, which increases your risk of developing breast cancer. This is especially true after menopause.</li> </ul>



Are you a woman over age 40?

Talk to your doctor about getting a mammogram today!

Mammograms are the primary method of breast cancer detection!

If you have some or all of these risk factors, it doesn't mean you will necessarily get breast cancer. It just means it's even more important for you to talk with your doctor about breast cancer screening.

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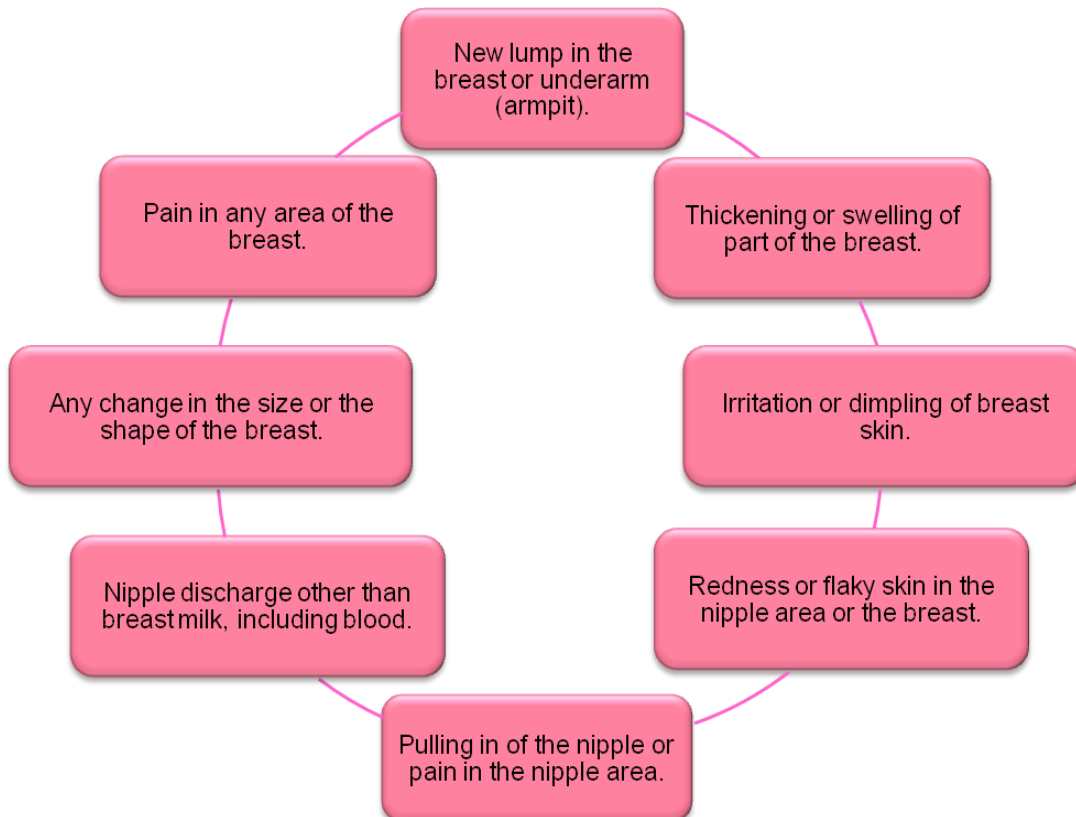
## Breast Cancer Prevention Tips

In addition to early detection, there are a few things you can do to help lower your chances of getting breast cancer. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend the following:

- ✓ Control your weight and exercise. Make healthy choices in the foods you eat and the kinds of drinks you have each day. Stay active.
- ✓ Know your family history of breast cancer. If you have a mother, sister, or daughter with breast cancer, ask your doctor what is your risk of getting breast cancer and how to lower your risk.
- ✓ Find out the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy. Some women use hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to treat the symptoms of menopause. Ask your doctor about the risks and benefits of HRT and find out if hormone replacement therapy is right for you. To learn more about HRT, visit the Agency for Healthcare Research Quality and the National Cancer Institute (NCI)—Menopausal Hormone Use and Cancer: Questions and Answers.
- ✓ Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. For more information, see the Alcohol Chapter of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010.

## Warning Signs to Watch For

Breast cancer isn't like a cold or the flu – there aren't sneezes, watery eyes, or coughs to tell you that you are sick. But the CDC reports that there are some warning signs of breast cancer that you should know about:



Everyone has different warning signs for breast cancer. Some women may not have any signs or symptoms but a routine mammogram shows that they have breast cancer.

Also, some of these warning signs can happen with other conditions that are not cancer.

If you have any signs that worry you, be sure to see your doctor right away.

Genetic testing for breast cancer requires pre-certification. For information on pre-certification, please call (941)-748-4501 ext. 6409 or 6411

### Manatee Health Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter is not a substitute for medical advice. It is for reference only and should not be used to determine treatment for your specific medical conditions—only a health care provider can do this. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician regarding the use of over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or consult your physician regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or before starting any new diet, fitness, or supplement regimen.

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