



POPULATION HEALTH & WELLBEING

Breast Cancer Awareness Toolkit

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Breast cancer awareness

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October is breast cancer awareness month



Breast cancer FAQ's

Know the risks

AGE

Breast cancer risk increases with age

GENETICS

Having a family history of breast cancer may increase risk for breast cancer; inherited mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes increase risk

REPRODUCTIVE HISTORY

Women who have started menstruation before age 12 and started menopause after age 55 have an increased risk of breast cancer.



1 in 8

Women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime

How to reduce your risk

- Get regular exercise
- Limit alcohol and avoid smoking
- Eat a healthy diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Get an annual mammogram



Breast cancer is the **most prevalent cancer in the world**.
But the earlier it is found, the better the chance for survival.

Regular mammograms and self-screening can increase the likelihood of breast cancer being caught in the early stages (and still localized) **with a 5-year survival rate of 99 percent.**

5-year survival rates
according to stage

 KNOW YOUR LEMONS



Early signs of breast cancer

LUMPS

Lumps can appear in the breast or underarm

SKIN CHANGES

Rashes, dimpling, swelling, or redness of the skin

NIPPLE CHANGES

Changes in shape or color

BREAST CHANGES

Changes in size or shape of one or both breasts

PAIN

Pain in the breast or armpit that doesn't go away

Sources:

1. Centers for Disease Control. (2024). Breast Cancer.
2. Know Your Lemons. (2024).

Financial cost of breast cancer

Treatment costs

Average cost of treatment is ~\$60,000 - \$134,000, but can vary depending on the stage and type of breast cancer. In 2021, the average out-of-pocket maximum for someone with a private health plan was \$4,272.

Top out-of-pocket expenses

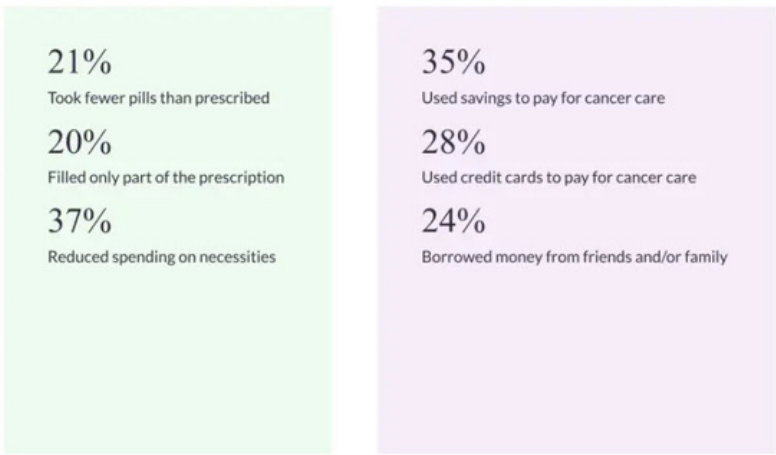
Reported by a survey from Breast Cancer Organization:

Percentage of survey participants who said they had unexpectedly high out-of-pocket costs for treatment, supportive care, and everyday necessities...



Breast cancer treatment and recovery can cause a lot of unexpected additional costs. Survey participants reported some strategies they have used to help manage the costs associated with cancer treatment.

**NOTE: The following are self-reported examples from survey results. These are not suggestions and are not recommended to use as cost-saving strategies.*



Source: 1.Breast Cancer Organization. (2024).

Other personal expenses

Time spent getting care

- Average two hrs/week receiving care in facility
 - Does not include additional time related to travel
- About one additional hour is spent on healthcare-related activities outside of clinic treatment each day.
- On average, the majority of working women report missing approximately 10 hours from work per week (Rocque et al.)

Long-term costs

- Getting proper follow-up care is essential after treatment to help ensure that cancer does not return.
 - After completing treatment, long-term care schedule typically includes a physical exam every three to six months for the first two to three years, then every six months until year five. After five years, an annual physical exam is necessary thereafter.

Other expenses:

- Nutrition and vitamin supplements
- Higher-quality food
- Additional childcare costs (for example, needing care for children while the parent is going to treatment appointments), and additional costs for household help that may not be feasible during treatments
- Over-the-counter medicines and supplies to help manage treatment side effects
- Complementary therapies, such as acupuncture, yoga, and massage
- Wigs, hats, or other head coverings, for those who have treatment-related hair loss, and cosmetics for thinning eyebrows and eyelashes or loss of nails
- Fertility-preserving treatments
- Care and treatment for lymphedema (including items such as compression sleeves and garments and seeing specialists for treatment)
- Post-surgery bras or other clothing needed for treatment-related reasons
- Supplies you may need while recovering from surgery (including items such as special pillows or a recliner)

Sources:

1. Breast Cancer Organization. (2024). *The Cost of Breast Cancer Care*
2. American Cancer Society. (2024). *Follow-up Care After Breast Cancer Treatment*.



Looking at breast cancer through an insurance lens

Here are the average stats for a company insuring 10,000 women:*

1,250

will be diagnosed with breast cancer

625

will be diagnosed before age 64

16

will be diagnosed each year during a 40-year career (on average)

If just one person is diagnosed in stage 1 or 2 instead of 3 or 4, the survivorship increase is substantial. AND there is also a dramatic reduction in treatment costs:

 KNOW YOUR LEMONSSM at WORK	Stage 0	Stages 1 and 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
5-Year Survival Rate**	100%	99-95%	81%	32%
Treatment Cost Per Person According to Stage***	\$109,553	\$147,880	\$242,910	\$278,275

Financial resources nationwide

NATIONAL MAMMOGRAM PROGRAM

The [National Breast Cancer Foundation](#) (NBCF) provides grants across the U.S. to provide screenings, mammograms and exams to underserved individuals.

THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Provides [resource lists](#) for free to low-cost mammograms and financial assistance.

Infinite Strength

If qualified, grants are provided to [help cover rent/mortgage for six months](#) for underserved solo parents diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer.





Impact on the workplace

Direct impacts on employers:

Absences from work: treatment and recovery may require extended leave periods, and projects may be impacted from these absences

Reduced productivity: there are many negative side effects of cancer treatment, such as fatigue, nausea and pain, that make it harder for an employee to maintain the same level of productivity

Accommodations: employers must make the necessary accommodations for employee's specific health needs

Increased costs: Self-insured employers will have higher costs related to treatment, as cancer continues to be one of the costliest claims for self-insured workplaces

Potential loss or turnover: some employees may choose to terminate their position due to the challenges of managing their treatment with work demands

How to mitigate impacts:

Supportive schedules: be more flexible with schedules to accommodate treatments and rest periods.

Open communication: encourage strong communication regarding needs during treatment

Employee education and resources: provide resources and educational campaigns about breast cancer to raise awareness and understanding among employees

Mental health support: have EAPs in place to support the psychological impact of a cancer diagnosis

Ensuring compliance with ADA and HIPAA: make sure that the workplace not only meets ADA minimum requirements, but goes above and beyond for your employees

Sources:

1. Pfizer. (2024). *Breast Cancer in the Workplace*.

Screening saves

Compared to no screening, **screening every two years reduces breast cancer deaths by 26 percent** for every 1,000 women screened.

3 ways to screen for breast cancer



Self-exam



Clinical breast exam



Mammogram

FDA notice and mammography reports

Did you know? As of September 10th, 2024, healthcare facilities that provide breast imaging services (mammograms) will be required to notify patients of their breast density in mammography reports. Two reports will be sent out: (1) one to the physician, and the (2) report to the patient explaining the breast density. Why is this important to know?

- Dense breast mammograms are significantly whiter than non-dense ones. Cancer typically appears white, as well, on mammograms.
- Those with dense breasts may be a good candidate for additional screenings because dense breast makes the mammogram report not only difficult to read but increases the risk to developing breast cancer.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.



Mammogram resources

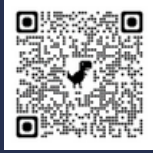
SUSAN G KOMEN - PATIENT CARE CENTER

[Excellent resource](#) for timely, accurate breast health and breast cancer information, services and resources. Free, personalized support to patients, caregivers, and family members. This includes education, emotional support, financial assistance, and access to care.

Resources for employers



[American Cancer Society: 7 Things to Know About Getting a Mammogram](#)



[UNC Health Appalachian: October Breast Cancer Infographic](#)



Week 1

Did you know that **1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer** in their lifetime?

**Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in the world.
But the earlier it is found, the better the chance for survival.**

Risks associated with developing breast cancer can be unchangeable, but there are some steps you can take to reduce your risk.

RISKS THAT CANNOT BE CHANGED:

- Age: Breast cancer risk increases with age
- Genetics: Having a family history of breast cancer may increase risk for breast cancer; inherited mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes increase risk
- Reproductive history: Women who have started menstruation before age 12 and started menopause after age 55 raises the risk of breast cancer.

RISKS THAT CAN BE CHANGED:

- Keep a healthy lifestyle: Eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight help reduce risk of getting breast cancer.
- Lower bad habits: Limit alcohol consumption and don't smoke to help reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- Increase exercise: Exercising more helps reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- Get screened: Have an annual screening to make sure that you are in the clear from breast cancer.



Resources

Simple steps to performing a breast exam

To help prevent breast cancer, all adult women should be regularly performing self-exams. For a quick and simple guide to understand how what you should do, follow along [Blue Cross Anthem's 5-Step Guide](#).



EMAIL-CAMPAIGNS

Week 2

Do you know the signs of breast cancer?

Knowing what to look out for is one of the best ways to catch breast cancer in the earlier stages, and when the survival chances are the greatest.



Know Your Lemons- 12 Breast Cancer Symptoms

Know Your Lemons is a global charity dedicated to awareness and education about breast cancer. It explains the 12 symptoms of breast cancer, teaches self-exam with monthly reminders, explains risk factors, and more. Find out more at knowyourlemons.org.



Activity- Know Your Lemons Breast Cancer IQ Quiz

Think you know the facts about breast cancer? Test your knowledge using Know Your Lemons Breast IQ Quiz.

Access the quiz here: knowyourlemons.typeform.com and share your results.

Video resources

The Baldwin Group: Breast cancer awareness

Let's think pink

Click the image below for presentation



Know Your Lemons educational video: Can an image save lives from breast cancer?

Click the image below to watch video





Activities for employees

Know Your Lemons shop

The Know Your Lemons is a global nonprofit organization focused on breast health education. Their [lemon shop](#) includes informative collateral to giveaways.

Wear pink or pink ribbon day

Pick a day during the month of October to wear pink at work. Wearing pink is to honor survivors, remember those we lost to the disease, and to support the progress being made towards the end of breast cancer.

Susan G Komen – MORE THAN PINK Walk

You can donate, run/walk, or volunteer for this event. Site: [MORE THAN PINK Walk](#)

