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**COMPLEMENTARY  
MEDICINE  
CONFERENCE**  
Sunday, May 5, 2013  
SUNY New Paltz



Create Your Own Reality painting graciously donated by Melissa Harris (melissaharris.com)

**Changes and choices YOU can make —  
little by little, bit by bit, day by day, to create a  
healthier environment, bolster your immune  
system and reduce the risk of breast cancer.**

# Healthy Lifestyles

# 2013 Calendar

**by Breast Cancer Options**

*A not-for-profit organization dedicated to supplying  
information, support and advocacy.*



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Breast Cancer Assay

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The **Oncotype DX** test helps identify which women with early-stage, estrogen receptor-positive (ER+) invasive breast cancer are more likely to benefit from adding chemotherapy to their hormonal treatment.\*

\* Paik et al. / Clin Oncol. 2006

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## A Case For The Precautionary Principle: - Fighting Breast Cancer Before the Fact

About 90% of the money raised in 'The Fight Against Breast Cancer' goes to research for better treatments and a cure. Both are very important but they are both "after the fact". Only about 10% of the money raised annually goes toward studying primary prevention, and the role of the environment in causing breast cancer. We need more focus on causes and primary prevention.

During October it becomes very clear that Breast Cancer is Big Business! Billions of dollars are raised in the name of breast cancer by companies and National organizations who make enormous profits.

The development of cancer involves the complex interplay of genetic and environmental influences. Only about 10% of breast cancers are due to inherited factors. If you add in other known risk factors, the total comes to 25-40%. *The reasons for the other 60-75% remain unclear and are likely due to environmental and other preventable factors that need to be studied.*

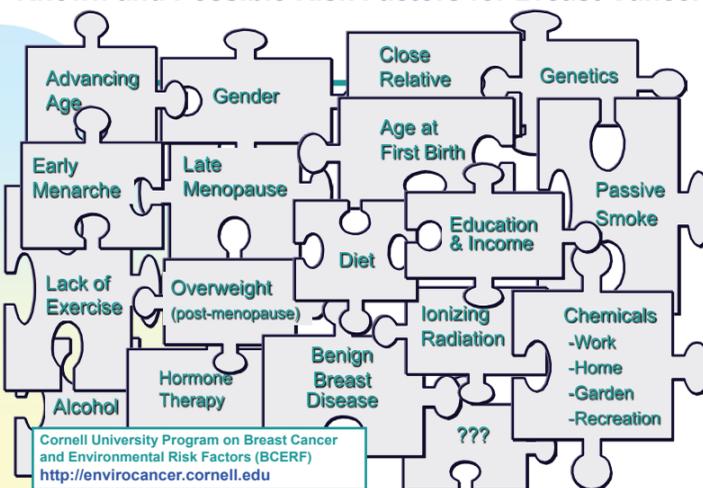
The Precautionary Principle states: "When an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In other words, *better safe than sorry!*"

There may be no smoking gun that implicates any one area of concern, or even one chemical, but exposure to low doses of lots of different chemicals may yield a result similar to a high-dose exposure to one chemical. The average American carries 212 chemicals in his or her body, yet scientists cannot tell us anything about the lifetime effects of living with this toxic 'cocktail.' Of the 80,000 synthetic chemicals registered for commercial use in the United States, less than 10% have been completely screened for carcinogenic or toxic health effects. Yet they are used in everything from preservatives in our lipstick, to flame retardants in our sofas, from plasticizers in our water bottles, to pesticides on our fruit and vegetables, from everyday household cleaning products, to children's toys. Many of these are *xenoestrogens!* They act like estrogens, and promote breast cancer. Adding insult to injury, many "pink ribbon" companies use these toxic chemicals in their products.

### How To Introduce The Precautionary Principle Into Daily Living:

- \* Become an informed consumer. Learn how to read product labels and don't purchase a product that can harm you or your family;
- \* Explore alternatives like "clean" technologies that eliminate waste and toxic substances; identify environmental risks factors and avoid them;
- \* Place the burden of proof on proponents of an activity rather than on victims or potential victims of the activity and work toward goals that protect health and the environment;
- \* Part of lowering your risk means being responsible for your health and your health choices: eating a good diet, learning how to deal with stress; integrating exercise into your life, identifying environmental risk factors and advocating for what you believe.

### Known and Possible Risk Factors for Breast Cancer



**We need to do everything we can NOW to eliminate the chance that our daughters and their daughters will ever get breast cancer.**

# January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		New Year's Day	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	30	31	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



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betw 83rd and 84th st

**Resources**

- www.safecosmetics.org
- www.allnaturalcosmetics.com
- www.acureorganics.com

# What's in Your Personal Care Products

If you're a typical adult, you use 12 personal care products each day — 17 if you are a teen. Parabens, phthalates and other hormone disrupting chemicals are found in most cosmetics and other personal care products. Your skin absorbs some of these ingredients; chemicals from spray products enter your lungs. Either way, they end up in your bloodstream and your body.

Synthetic chemicals have been linked to the rising incidence of breast cancer and many other diseases. Using these products in combination with the hundreds of other chemicals that we regularly come in contact with on a daily basis may increase the risk of several cancers. Brands using these chemicals are sold by many of the same companies that raise money for breast cancer awareness.

Chemical	Products Containing It	Why Avoid It	Solutions/Alternatives
<b>PARABENS</b> (Methyl, Propyl, Ethyl, Butyl) Used as an antimicrobial and preservative. Extends shelf life of cosmetics and other products.	Cosmetics, Lotions, Creams, Sunscreens, Shaving/styling gels, Toothpaste, Shampoo, Conditioners	Estrogen-mimicking chemicals. Absorbed through the skin. They have been found in biopsy samples from breast tumors.	<b>Solutions/Alternatives</b> <b>Learn to Read Labels</b> <i>By law all skin care products must be labeled with the ingredients in descending order of their quantity in the product. A good rule of thumb is to divide the ingredient list into thirds: the top third usually contains 90-95% of the product, the middle third usually contains 5-8% and the bottom third, 1-3%.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use personal care brands without harmful chemicals such as Aubrey Organics, Dr. Hauschka, Suki's Naturals, Weleda, Acure Organics.</li> <li>• Choose natural ingredients made from vegetable dyes such as henna, annatto, beta carotene, chlorophyll.</li> <li>• Use pure essential oils instead of perfume.</li> <li>• Choose products with safer preservatives: grapefruit seed extract; phenoxyethanol, potassium sorbate, sorbic acid, vitamin E (tocopherol), vitamin A (retinyl), vitamin C (ascorbic acid)</li> <li>• Use Mineral based cosmetics and hair dyes with natural vegetable colors.</li> <li>• Avoid use of paraben-containing preservatives, especially for those breast cancer survivors who are strongly Estrogen Receptor positive.</li> <li>• Avoid all scented products</li> </ul>
<b>PHTHALATES</b> Used to render plastics soft and flexible; solvents. They are also used in perfumes to dissolve fragrance.	Nail polish, perfumes, soaps, lotions, moisturizers, hair spray, deodorant, nail polish, hair gel, mousse, children's toys, perfumes & fragrances, plastics, cosmetics, register receipts, flooring, adhesives, wallpaper, furniture, raincoats, shower curtains, car interiors	Endocrine-disrupting chemicals. Linked to early puberty in girls, a risk factor for later-life breast cancer. Absorbed through the skin, inhaled as fumes, ingested when children put toys in their mouth. Exposure can lead to cancer, liver toxicity, reproductive toxicity, pubertal development, and more.	
<b>FRAGRANCE</b> May include phthalates, synthetic musks (which disrupt hormones); ethylene oxide (a mammary carcinogen).	Perfumes and scented cosmetics	Hormone disruptor. Accumulates in the body and shows up in the fat, blood, and breast milk of women who wore perfumes that contained it. Helps chemicals absorb into the skin. Most "fragrances" are synthetic and are either cancer-causing or otherwise toxic.	
<b>OXYBENZONE</b> (A chemical in the family of benzophenones)	Sunscreens, lip balm with SPF, face creams & moisturizers, fragrance & perfume, anti-aging creams, lipstick, Foundation with SPF, nail polish, polish remover, aftershave and shaving cream	Has estrogenic activity. Blocks ultra violet UVB rays and prevents the body from producing vitamin D needed to prevent breast cancer and other diseases.	

# February

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10	11	12	13	Valentine's Day 14	15	16
17	President's Day 18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

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# HORMONES: How they are affected by our environment

**O**ur modern lifestyle poses many threats to optimal hormone function and balance. Stress, toxicity, exposure to many toxins in the environment and products we use daily, poor quality food choices, lack of sleep, and many pharmaceutical medications are all known hormone disruptors. The most overlooked hormone disruptors are electromagnetic energy fields generated from cell phones and a variety of electrical devices and sources.

There are important physiological processes that are either controlled or influenced by melatonin: it regulates our circadian rhythms governing our waking/sleep cycle and it is one of the most efficient destroyers of free radicals, thereby allowing DNA synthesis and cell division to occur. Melatonin inhibits the release of estrogen, and actually suppresses the development of breast cancer. Melatonin's other anticancer property is its ability to increase cytotoxicity of the immune system's killer lymphocytes. It is even able to enhance the immune system and counteract stress-induced immunosuppression.

**Melatonin** is a hormone produced in total darkness, from the pineal gland. With a disrupted circadian rhythm, the body produces less melatonin and the cell's DNA may be more prone to cancer-causing mutations. Light at night has become a major environmental pollutant disrupting this pattern and having great impact on hormone balance. Also, watching TV, sitting in front of computer screens, reading with artificial light into the wee hours, or sleeping with a light on, can contribute to melatonin deficiency. In addition, modest disturbances of sleep reduce Natural Killer cell activity—part of the body's defense mechanism against viruses, bacteria, even cancer—and can impact the body's natural immunity.

Melatonin increases the level of naturally occurring antioxidants in breast cancer cells and acts like an anti-estrogen and reduces the number of estrogen receptors on breast cancer cells. The longer you stay in the dark the more melatonin your body produces. (*Melatonin-estrogen interactions in breast cancer. J Pineal Res. 2005 May*)

**Working the Night Shift:** Circulating melatonin levels are abnormally low in ER-positive breast cancer patients thereby supporting the melatonin hypothesis for breast cancer in women working the night shift. Evidence from a number of human and animal studies found that night-shift workers had a 36-48% higher risk of breast cancer than those who worked during the daytime. Worst affected are flight attendants and nurses. *Melatonin levels are believed to be inversely related to estrogen levels.* When melatonin levels are low, estrogen levels are high, and vice-versa. Light-at-night and/or magnetic field levels suppress the normal nightly rise in melatonin and estrogen levels are increased.

Studies of blind women show that their circadian rhythms are undisturbed by artificial light. Blind women have a 50% reduced risk of breast cancer.

**ELECTRO-MAGNETIC RADIATION (EMR)** — Women and men who work in electrical jobs, including electricians, power line workers and electrical engineers have a greater risk of dying from breast cancer. This increased risk has been linked to the suppression of melatonin from Electro-Magnetic Radiation (EMR). Overnight exposure of women to elevated levels of EMR increased estrogen levels, a known risk factor for breast cancer. In men, EMR exposure reduced levels of testosterone — a hormone drop that has been linked to testicular and prostate cancers.

Wireless Internet and phone networks expose us to low levels of EMF radiation (electromagnetic field). Cell phones, digital clocks, TV's and computers can disrupt hormones and suppress nightly melatonin production.

Exposures also lead to increased levels of adrenaline, the flight or fight hormone. Exposure alters the level of neurotransmitters, serotonin and dopamine. These hormones play a major role in moods—especially depression and anxiety.

**Tamoxifen**, the most popular drug given to prevent recurrence of breast cancer, loses its ability to halt the proliferation of cancer cells when exposed to Electromagnetic Fields. The level of EMFs that produced this effect is found in common sources, including hair dryers, vacuum cleaners, or appliances.

### Some suggestions:

- \* Stay at least 3-5 feet away from household magnetic fields and their effects.
- \* Keep your computer in "sleep" mode;
- \* Disable your wireless network when not in use;
- \* Don't keep your cell phone in your pocket; text instead of calling.
- \* Get a good night's sleep. Women who sleep 9 hours or more have a 70% lower breast cancer risk. Make sure your room is quiet and dark and your bed is comfortable.
- \* Avoid light at night as much as you can. If you need a night light, use one with a red bulb which won't suppress melatonin.
- \* If possible, complete work during the day; sleep at night.
- \* Get up and go to bed at the same time every day.
- \* Exercise regularly. Exercise done early in the day may promote better quality sleep; vigorous exercise just before bedtime may delay sleep.

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Compliments  
of

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March

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Daylight Savings Begins Spring Forward 10	11	NYSBCN Advocacy Day 12	13	14	15	16
St. Patrick's Day 17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24						
Easter Sunday 31	25	26	27	28	Good Friday 29	30



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# Using Complementary Therapies With Conventional Treatments

The terms “complementary medicine” and “alternative medicine” often are used interchangeably. However, though they sometimes refer to the same modalities, the two are very different.

Complementary medicine is used *together* with traditional Western medicine. Alternative medicine is used *in place of* conventional medicine. Many patients integrate conventional treatments and complementary therapies. There is no scientific evidence that these therapies can cure cancer but they can help with side effects and optimize immune function. Complementary therapies work best as part of your total treatment plan, combined with your medical treatments. They focus on areas often neglected by conventional medicine that may improve overall health and survival.

### Complementary Therapies Can:

- Help you feel better and improve your quality of life
- Improve your general health & immunity
- Give you a sense of control over what is happening
- Reduce stress, tension, sleeplessness, anxiety and depression, and make you feel more relaxed
- Help reduce the symptoms of cancer, such as pain, feeling sick, breathlessness, constipation, diarrhea, tiredness and poor appetite
- Help reduce the side effects of cancer treatment such as nausea, joint pain, fatigue, sexual side effects

### Questions To Ask:

- What do you expect to gain from a complementary therapy?
- How do you choose a complementary therapy?
- How do you know if a therapy is working for you?
- Can the therapy interfere with conventional treatment?
- Is the therapy covered by insurance?
- Is the therapy safe or can it cause harm or interfere with conventional treatments?
- Are there side effects?
- Are there established standards for the therapy? Is the therapist qualified?
- Has research been done about the effectiveness of the therapy?
- Are there medical records or clinical trials offering scientific support of treatment?

### Complementary Therapies Include:

- Alternative medical systems (Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Naturopathy)
- Mind-body interventions (biofeedback, hypnosis, mindfulness meditation, yoga, guided imagery)

- Biologically based therapies (supplements, herbals, vitamins, detoxification, elimination)
- Manipulation and body-based methods (massage, chiropractic, osteopathy, Feldenkrais, Stress reduction/relaxation, Alexander Technique)
- Energy therapies (acupuncture, Reiki, magnets, therapeutic touch)

### As Well As:

- Dietary modification
- Exercise (3-4 hours per week)
- Sleep (at least 7-8 hours per night in darkness)
- Elimination of hormone disrupting chemicals
- Art or Music Therapy
- Support groups/Counseling/Therapy

### IN EVALUATING A THERAPY: Be open-minded yet skeptical.

- ASK QUESTIONS and ALWAYS do your own research.
- Be cautiously open-minded.
- Learn about the potential benefits and risks.
- Look at:
  - The types and number of studies done
  - The consistency of findings

### How To Know If A Complementary Therapy Is Working For You: Subjective Vs. Objective

*Subjective responses* include improved energy, appetite and well-being. Do you feel any different? *Objective data* would include testing to see if there is a change.

### TESTING BEFORE & AFTER:

There are a number of tests that are not normally done for routine cancer testing that may give patient information on immune status, hormone balance, chemical exposures, and nutrient status. This is also a way that you can evaluate if something is working for you.

**YOU CAN TEST FOR:** Vitamin D levels; Toxic exposures and chemicals; Hormonal Balance; Nutritional Status; Digestive Function, etc.

### LABS THAT DO SPECIALIZED TESTING:

AIT Laboratories - [www.aitlabs.com](http://www.aitlabs.com);  
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# April

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## Non-Toxic Living at Home and Work

**T**he average household and workplace contain about 62 toxic chemicals that are used on a daily basis. We are exposed to phthalates in synthetic fragrances, noxious fumes in oven cleaners, BPA in plastics and register receipts and a host of chemicals in cleaning

products. The ingredients in common household products have been linked to cancer, asthma, reproductive disorders, hormone disruption and neurotoxicity. Below are the common causes of some of many of the problems.

**CANNED FOODS:** The epoxy resin lining in canned foods contains bisphenol A, or BPA, which leaches into food and then into us. Studies have shown that the amount leached is enough to cause breast cancer cells to proliferate in the lab.

**Solution:** Avoid all canned foods. Choose fresh and frozen over canned foods.

**PLASTICS:** Many plastics contain hormone-disrupting phthalates, especially polyvinyl chloride, or PVC (usually recycling code 3). Avoid clear, shatterproof plastic that contains BPA (usually code 7). Safer plastics are coded 1, 2, 4 and 5.

**Solution:** Choose stainless steel, glass and ceramic. Buy PVC free shower curtains.

**DON'T MICROWAVE IN PLASTIC:** Even "microwave safe" plastic can leach BPA and other chemicals into your food when heated.

**Solution:** Choose glass or ceramic containers. Cover your food with a ceramic plate or an unbleached paper towel instead of plastic wrap.

**CLEANING PRODUCTS:** Many cleaning products contain harmful chemicals. They contain the sudsing agents diethanolamine (DEA) and triethanolamine (TEA). They form nitrosamines — carcinogens and penetrate the skin.

**Solution:** Make your own. Use baking soda for scouring; vinegar to clean glass.

**WATER BOTTLES:** Bisphenol A (BPA) is used in polycarbonate plastic reusable water bottles. It's found in rigid plastics, the lining of food cans, and other products. BPA is a hormone disruptor.

**Solution:** Use non-toxic, reusable stainless steel bottles or BPA free plastics.

**PESTICIDES, FUNGICIDES, HERBICIDES, AND FERTILIZERS:** They are neuro-toxins and they don't know the difference between the BUGS and YOU!

**Solution:** For fleas, roaches, ants, etc., use diatomaceous earth, boric acid, and nematodes. Avoid all other pesticides.

**FRAGRANCE:** Fragrance can contain dozens of chemicals-including hormone-disrupting phthalates and synthetic musks. Used in almost all cleaning, laundry, and personal-care products, fabric softeners, perfumes, scented detergents, etc. The chemicals go directly into the bloodstream when applied to our skin and are absorbed into the skin from our clothing.

**Solution:** Avoid synthetic fragrance and buy fragrance-free products or purchase natural fragrances like essential oils.

**CASH REGISTER RECEIPTS:** Bisphenol A (BPA) is used in cash register thermal paper receipts. It's a hormone disruptor.

**Solution:** Do Not take a cash register receipt if you don't need to.

**AVOID DRY CLEANING:** Conventional dry cleaning uses perchloroethylene (PERC), formaldehyde, naphthalene, benzene. In addition to long-term effects on health, including cancer, short term exposures to air-borne PERC can cause skin irritation, dizziness and headaches.

**Solution:** Use dry cleaners that clean with the ecofriendly CO2 process. Or hand wash with unscented fabric detergent for delicates.

**PRODUCTS WITH CHLORINE:** Women with breast cancer have 50% to 60% higher levels of organochlorines in their breast tissue than women without breast cancer. Chlorine is found in many city water supplies, paper products, coffee filters, tampons and swimming pools. Harmful effects are intensified when the fumes are heated, as in the shower or dishwasher.

**Solution:** Use non-chlorine alternatives to bleach for household cleaning, laundry; Use unbleached toilet paper and tampons; Use natural coffee filters; Use a household water filter; Swim in salt water pools.

**AIR FRESHENERS AND SCENTED CANDLES:** These contain phthalates and benzene. Women who use solid air fresheners are at higher risk of developing breast cancer. (*Silent Spring Institute 2010*)

**Solution:** Use beeswax candles scented with essential oils. Use odor absorbers made with Zeolite. Fill a small spray bottle with a mixture of four teaspoons baking soda and four cups of water. (You can add essential oils, etc.) Spray it in a fine mist to neutralize odors. Open your windows to let air circulate.

**HUMIDIFIERS OR DEHUMIDIFIERS:** Standing water can encourage mold growth.

**Solution:** Empty water after each use.

**NON TOXIC HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS:** MIX: ¼ c. baking; ½ c. vinegar; ½ c. borax; 1 gallon water • surfaces that need scouring, add salt or baking soda.

**WINDOW CLEANERS:** MIX 2 tsp. vinegar; 1 qt. warm water

**DRAIN CLEANER:** POUR TOGETHER: ½ c. borax in drain followed by 2 c. water

**AIR CLEANER:** Houseplants can remove toxins from the air, such as formaldehyde, benzene etc. The best plants for removing toxins are spider plants, philodendrons, aloe vera, English ivy, Boston fern.

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Breast Cancer Options Complementary Medicine Conference	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mother's Day	12	13	14	15	16	17
	19	20	21	22	23	24
26	Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31

*Mary*



## Lifestyle And Breast Cancer Risk: Obesity, Alcohol Consumption and Exercise



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Lifestyle factors such as obesity, smoking and alcohol consumption are linked with a number of life-threatening diseases in addition to cancer. Reducing or eliminating these factors could have the added benefit of reducing the risk of developing a second breast cancer. Studies confirm that healthy lifestyle choices can sometimes trump genes and environment when it comes to breast cancer. Moderate exercise, little alcohol intake and holding down one's weight might be key strategies that reduce the odds of getting breast cancer — even if a woman's mother or sister has had the disease.

Only about 10-15% of breast cancers are due to heredity. Add in other known risk factors and the total comes to 25-40%. The reasons for the other 60-75% remain unclear and are likely due to environmental exposure and other preventable factors. Most people are born with normal genes, but, during the course of a lifetime, they become damaged and that can lead to cancer. Breast cancer has a greater than 90% five-year survival rate in the US resulting in a growing number of survivors. These women have a two to six times greater risk of developing a second cancer compared to women in the general population, so it is important to understand factors that increase that risk

Studies show a connection between the Western diet — high in processed carbohydrates, sugars and animal fats — and cancer risk. Women might also reduce their risk of breast cancer by avoiding unnecessary medical radiation, hormone replacement therapy, tobacco smoke, limiting alcohol consumption, maintaining a healthy weight, and exercising regularly.

### How does obesity increase cancer risk?

Obesity is defined as having a body mass index over 30. It is implicated in eight different types of cancer: breast, ovarian, endometrial, kidney, colorectal, pancreatic, esophageal and cancer of the gallbladder. It means that you have more fat tissue which has a hormonal effect. In the case of breast cancer, it leads to higher circulating estrogen levels. Weight gain after age 50 increases your risk of breast cancer after menopause. When the ovaries stop producing hormones after menopause, fat tissue becomes the most important source of estrogen. Obese women have more fat tissue and higher estrogen levels, potentially leading to more rapid growth of estrogen-responsive breast tumors.

Obesity can also lead to inflammation. Excess inflammatory signals can stimulate the growth of cancer cells. The more overweight a person is, the greater the level of inflammatory signals. Obese people often have chronic low-level inflammation associated with increased cancer risk.

Obese people have a condition known as insulin resistance (increased levels of insulin and IGF-1 in their blood), which may promote the development of some tumors and may prevent early-stage cancer cells from dying normally.

### Alcohol consumption

Clear links have been established linking breast cancer risk to even moderate amounts of drinking. The increase in risk of developing breast cancer from moderate drinking (no more than one drink a day) is about 1%. The risk increases by about 6% for each additional alcoholic drink consumed on a daily basis. 3 or more drinks a day on a regular basis raises the risk by 30% compared to those who don't drink. A "drink" is the equivalent of 12oz of 5% beer, 5oz of 12% wine or 1.5oz of 80 proof liquor. Alcohol increases circulating estrogen levels promoting tumor growth.

*Women who drink more than one alcoholic beverage a day have about a 20% higher risk of developing breast cancer; a similar degree of risk applies to obese women and/or women who lead a sedentary life style.*

### Can exercise help reduce risk?

Regular moderate exercise lowers the levels of both IGF-1 and circulating estrogen levels in our blood. It can do this even if the exercise does not lead to a healthy weight. It is possible that lowered levels of these cancer promoters are one explanation for the protective effect of regular exercise.

### How much physical activity is needed to lower breast cancer risk? What kinds of activities count?

Physical activity affects breast cancer in 2 distinct ways: directly, by influencing circulating hormones, and indirectly, by helping to control weight. Studies show that exercising two to three hours per week can reduce breast cancer risk by 30%, four or more hours by 50%.

### Suggestions of Changes You Can Make

- Lose weight. Evidence shows that even losing as little as five pounds can significantly reduce the risk of breast cancer and reduce the risk of other cancers as well. Women who gained 21-30 pounds since age 18 were 40% more likely to develop breast cancer than women who had not gained more than 5 pounds; women who gained 70 pounds doubled their risk.
- Eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables, with no processed food, sugar or animal fats will help you to maintain a healthy weight.
- Make sure that your vitamin D levels are optimal. Studies suggest that a low vitamin D status may explain at least 20% of the cancer risk attributable to high BMI.
- Do at least 3-4 hours of moderate exercise per week. Moderate activities include things like walking, biking, and even housework and gardening. Vigorous activities generally engage large muscle groups and cause a noticeable increase in heart rate, sweating and breathing depth and frequency.
- Consume less or no alcohol. The more you drink, the higher your risk.

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# Detoxification

The body is exposed to thousands of toxins every day from a variety of sources. Toxins are specific products of the metabolic activities of a living organism. Some toxins come from natural processes inside our bodies which help keep us alive (such as creating energy, or killing harmful bacteria and viruses). Our bodies also absorb various environmental toxins. Many of them are estrogen mimics called xeno-estrogens. They may come from the air, electronic devices, our food, water we drink or bathe in, the clothes we wear and medications we take. The body processes and detoxifies toxins through the liver, kidneys, bowels and lower intestines, lungs and skin, normally changing them into safer chemicals and excreting them.

People who lead healthy, active lifestyles have an easier time eliminating toxins from their bodies. Those who eat a high fat, high sugar diet, consume caffeine and alcohol, smoke cigarettes, take drugs, and get limited exercise risk accumulating more toxins, especially in fatty tissue, than the body can excrete.

When peoples' bodies start accumulating toxins a variety of health imbalances occur. Waste may begin to re-circulate within the body. Toxins can get into the blood stream and cause inflammation in various parts of the body. The body may seek to purge excess waste through the skin causing acne, rashes, eczema or other unhealthy conditions. Toxins may remain in body fat, preventing people from losing weight and fully detoxifying.

Xeno-estrogens, even at low levels, fool the body as if they were also estrogen and have the ability to disrupt our natural hormonal balance and systems. They are fat soluble and become lodged within our fat cells. Once there they are very difficult to get rid of. They create hormonal havoc that can lead to conditions like PMS, menopausal weight gain-especially in the abdominal area-and increased breast cancer risk. An important breast cancer risk factor is linked to overall exposure to estrogen, which can be impacted by early menarche, late menopause, late childbearing and exposure to "exogenous hormones" (hormones produced outside of the body).

### HOW TO HELP THE BODY ELIMINATE TOXINS

- Identify and reduce toxins in your environment.
- Exercise -
  - It helps your blood and lymphatic system remove impurities. It also assists the passage of waste through the colon.
  - Deeper breathing and increased circulation during exercise boosts oxygen and nutrient supply to our cells. Deep breathing also helps remove acid wastes via our lungs.
  - Sweating during exercise opens and cleans pores.
  - A sedentary lifestyle impairs waste removal and all aspects of health.
- Eat a diet rich in organic fresh fruits and vegetables and get plenty of fiber.
- Drink plenty of pure water to help the kidneys flush excess acids.
- Get 8 hours of sleep per night.
- Sleep at least 3-5 feet away from electrical outlets and unplug devices to avoid exposure to Electro Magnetic Radiation.
- Detox your mind, heart and spirit.



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# Vitamins, Herbs and Supplements

Eating a well balanced diet provides a wide variety of antioxidants, vitamins and enzymes, but many health professionals agree that supplements are now necessary to counteract exposures to toxic chemicals in our air and water, pesticides and herbicides in our food, soil depletion, and the depletion of nutrients caused by stress. Supplements should be tailored to an individual's needs which can be determined by testing. We recommend that you consult with a knowledgeable practitioner to determine your specific needs.

### The following are popular supplements used by cancer patients:

**Natural Aromatase Inhibitors** - Aromatase inhibitors are used to stop the production of estrogen in post-menopausal women who have estrogen receptor positive breast cancer. The three aromatase inhibitors commonly used are Arimidex, Aromasin and Femara. These medications can produce problematic side effects.

Natural aromatase inhibitors include flavones, resveratrol (found in red wine) and oleuropein (olive leaf). One of the most potent aromatase inhibitor is Chrysin, found in Passiflora incarnate (passion flower). Red wine, alcohol-free red wine, green tea and black tea (200microL/mL) also decreases aromatase activity. Ellagic acid found in pomegranates also inhibits aromatase. Its metabolite, Urolithin B, significantly inhibited cell growth and has the potential to prevent estrogen-responsive breast cancers. There are ongoing small studies.

**Curcumin** - Helps repair DNA that has been damaged by radiation. Has several cancer-fighting properties. Anti-inflammatory.

**AHCC** - Shows a protective effect on the liver and other areas of the body against chemotherapy drugs damage. Helps in counteracting free radical damage to the cell DNA and in preventing cell oxidation, both thought to cause cell mutations.

**Calcium d- glucarate** - Helps the body eliminate many harmful substances like abnormally high levels of steroid hormones including estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone.

**CLA (Conjugated linoleic acid)** - CLA compounds possess anti-estrogenic properties: exhibit antitumor activity on breast cancer cells.

**CoQ10** - Helps protect the heart from the damage from doxorubicin (adriamycin) chemotherapy.

**Vitamin D** - Higher levels of vitamin D are associated with reduced incidence rates of breast cancer worldwide. Vitamin D (calcitriol) is a hormone — Vitamin D promotes normal cell growth and cell differentiation, promotes calcium absorption and helps to maintain hormonal balance and a healthy immune system.

The highest breast cancer mortality rates in the U.S. are in the northeast and urban areas, and lowest rates in the south and rural areas. This is likely due to the variation in sunlight and the subsequent vitamin D production. Testing your vitamin D3 level is recommended. The 25-hydroxy vitamin D test can be done at many labs.

The best way to raise vitamin D levels is to allow limited exposure of your skin to the sun. Sunblock with an SPF of 15 or higher will block 100% of vitamin D production. Most people can supplement with 2000 IU vitamin D3 daily.

**DIM (3,3'-diindolylmethane)** - DIM is a phytonutrient found in cruciferous vegetables including cabbage, broccoli, brussels sprouts, kale, cauliflower, and turnips. Women with breast cancer make too little of the 2-hydroxy or "good" metabolite of estrogen and too much of the 16-hydroxy or "bad" variety. This dangerous form of estrogen dominance can result from inheritance, diet, or exposure to environmental chemicals. DIM supports a healthy estrogen balance by increasing beneficial 2-hydroxy estrogens and reducing the unwanted 16-hydroxy variety.

**Ave ULTRA** - A wheat germ extract that helps to promote immune system balance by promoting optimal NK immune cell targeting ability and the coordinated response of macrophages, B-cells and T-Cells. It shows great efficacy in reducing treatment side effects, supports healthy cell metabolic regulation and induces cell apoptosis.

**Medicinal mushrooms** - Mushrooms have been shown to reduce cell proliferation and also have aromatase-blocking activity. They have been shown to stimulate components of cellular immunity such as T cells, B cells, macrophages and natural killer (NK) cells, demonstrate anti-tumor activity and may restrict tumor metastasis

**Iodine** - Iodine, a trace mineral concentrated in thyroid and breast tissue, helps to normalize the impact of estrogens on the breast and turns off the estrogen receptor sites. Consumption of Iodine has dropped 50% since the 1970's. An iodine loading test should be done to assess levels. Supplementation comes in the form of Ioderal tablets or Lugol's Iodine Solution and can improve fibrocystic disease. Seaweed is rich in iodine.

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# August

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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# Myths And Realities About Breast Cancer

Compiled by Breast Cancer Options from a variety of sources.

**Myth: Breast cancer is the second leading killer of women.**

**Reality:** Breast cancer kills 40,000 women a year in the U.S., but stroke (96,000 deaths), lung cancer (71,000), and chronic lower respiratory disease (67,000) each kill more women annually.

**Myth: Women have a 1-in-8 chance at any age of getting breast cancer.**

**Reality:** Most people think they have a higher risk of breast cancer than they actually do. Estimates are that a woman age 20 has about a 1 in 2,000 risk of developing breast cancer in the next ten years; at age 40, about 1 in 100; age 60, 1 in 28; age 85, 1 in 8. About 50% of breast cancer occurs among women age 62 or older.

**Myth: Men don't get breast cancer.**

**Reality:** About 1% of all new breast cancers annually are diagnosed in men. Though rare, male breast cancer is often aggressive. The lifetime risk for men is about 1/10th of 1%.

**Myth: Most breast lumps are cancerous.**

**Reality:** Roughly 80% of lumps in women's breasts are cysts or other non cancerous conditions, but report all lumps to your doctor.

**Myth: A diagnosis of breast cancer means I'm going to die.**

**Reality:** 85- 90% of women diagnosed with breast cancer survive at least 10 years after treatment. Most live much longer and die of other causes. Breast cancer that has spread to other parts of the body, poses the greatest challenge, although women with metastatic breast cancer often live for years with their disease. Breast cancer death rates remain higher for African-American women than Caucasian women.

**Myth: I'm too young to worry about breast cancer.**

**Reality:** After adolescence, you're never too young to get breast cancer. While a lump in a younger woman is much less likely to be cancer than a lump in an older woman, it can be cancer and needs to be checked out. 25% of women with breast cancer are younger than 50.

**Myth: Antiperspirants increase your risk of getting breast cancer.**

**Reality:** We don't know. Because of their weak estrogen-like properties, parabens — used as preservatives in some antiperspirants — are possibly carcinogenic. Studies found parabens in 18 of 20 samples of tissue from human breast tumors. However, this does not prove that parabens cause breast tumors. More research is needed. In the meantime avoid parabens in any product especially in the breast and armpit area.

**Myth: Overweight women have the same breast cancer risk as other women.**

**Reality:** Weight gain after the age of 18 is associated with a 45% increase in breast cancer risk as well as higher rates of breast cancer recurrence and mortality in both premenopausal and postmenopausal breast cancer patients. WEIGHT GAIN AFFECTS SURVIVAL, especially if you gained the weight later in life.

**Myth: If your mammogram is negative, there is nothing to worry about.**

**Reality:** Mammograms fail to detect as much as 20% of breast cancer in women over 50, and as much as 40% in younger women. Younger women at increased risk should talk with their doctor about the benefits and limitations of starting mammograms when they are younger, using other technologies or having more frequent exams. Clinical breast exams and knowing what is normal for your breast are also crucial pieces of the screening process.

**Myths: Being called back for "extra views" after my mammogram means I have cancer.**

**Reality:** Mammograms often detect images in the breast that may or may not be real changes (such as a fold of the breast tissue). Extra views may be needed to help determine if these areas are real or not. The vast majority of women who have extra views do not have cancer.

**Myth: Mammograms prevent breast cancer.**

**Reality:** Mammography is a screening test to detect cancer already present in the breast. It does not prevent cancer, nor will it always detect the disease. Breast cancer awareness campaigns urge women to have annual mammograms so that breast cancer can be found early and "cured." Regardless of how small a tumor is when it is detected, some cancers are so aggressive that they are not easily treated with current available therapies.

**Myth: After I've survived 5 years, my breast cancer won't return.**

**Reality:** Breast cancer can recur at any time, although it is more likely to happen within the first five to 10 years after diagnosis and treatment: 75% of women who will get a recurrence see it within six years, and 25% recur within the 10 years after that.

**Myth: A diagnosis of breast cancer is an emergency and treatment decisions have to be made immediately.**

**Reality:** It may feel like an emergency but most breast cancers have been present for 8 to 10 years by the time you can feel a lump. It's important to take time to gather information and get second opinions to make informed decisions about treatment.

**Myth: Most women with breast cancer have a family history of the disease.**

**Reality:** 85 -90% of women who develop breast cancer do not have an affected mother, sister or daughter.

**Myth: If you have a family history of breast cancer you will definitely get the disease.**

**Reality:** Most women with a family history of breast cancer will never get breast cancer. If a first-degree relative (a parent, sibling or child) has or has had breast cancer, your risk of developing it doubles. (see myth 2) Two first degree relatives with the disease further increase your risk. Your father's family history is as important as your mother's. The inherited mutations (BRCA1 and BRCA2) are not always passed on.

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# September

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# Screening, Detection and Follow-up

## SCREENING

While mammography is still considered the best tool for early diagnosis in **most** women, there are harms and benefits. The decision whether and when to start screening is a personal one. It should be based on a patient's health, family history and values, and be decided by her and her doctor.

The recommended screening for women who have never been diagnosed with breast cancer and are not at *high risk* of developing the disease is **different** from the recommended screening for women who have never had a breast cancer diagnosis but are considered at *high risk*.

Detection methods, mostly mammograms, are used to detect cancer as early as possible. Techniques other than mammography may be used when women are considered at high risk. After diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, many of the same techniques are used to detect any recurrence.

**There are four different categories of breast cancer found during screening tests.**

- \* Slow-growing cancers that would be found and successfully treated with or without screening.
- \* Aggressive cancers, so-called bad cancers that are deadly whether they are found early by screening, or late because of a lump or other symptoms. **Screening does not help women with these aggressive cancers.**
- \* Innocuous cancers that would never have amounted to anything, but they still are treated once they show up on a mammogram. Women with these cancers are over diagnosed, are treated unnecessarily, and therefore harmed by screening.
- \* A fraction of cancers that are deadly but, when found at just the right moment, can have their courses changed by treatment. Women with these cancers are helped by mammograms. Clinical trial data states that 1 woman per 1,000 healthy women screened over 10 years falls into this category.

## TECHNOLOGY

**Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI):** MRI is used if a breast problem is detected using mammography, other imaging or physical exam. MRI offers better sensitivity for detection of breast cancers for women who carry a BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 mutation.

**Ultrasound:** This technology identifies abnormalities in dense tissue, which makes it valuable in young, high risk women. It can determine if a suspicious area is a cyst (always non-cancerous) or solid tissue (dense mass).

**Digital vs. Analog Mammograms:** Digital mammography is significantly better than film mammography in screening women under age 50, or women of any age who have very dense breasts. The radiation dose associated with digital mammography is significantly lower (averaging 22% lower) than that of conventional film mammography.

**Timing of Mammograms:** For pre-menopausal women mammography is the most accurate on days 1-9 of the menstrual cycle. This is a low-estrogen, low-progesterone phase and breast tissue tends to be less dense, so mammograms are more apt to spot small, hard-to-see tumors.

## FOLLOW-UP

**After a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment many women wonder how they will be followed to make sure that any recurrence will be found 'early'.** Many breast cancer patients believe that a full battery of tests including a complete blood chemistry, tumor markers, bone scans, liver ultrasound, chest X-ray and CT or MRI of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis and PET scans will give them a better outcome.

However, studies have shown that if you do not have any symptoms the most effective way to detect recurrence and/or metastatic breast cancer is to have a periodic clinical exam along with a detailed medical history.

A good physical exam includes:

- \* A breast exam
- \* Examining the chest wall, nodes, skin, and scar
- \* Checking for liver enlargement
- \* Checking for bone tenderness
- \* Listening to the heart and lungs
- \* Checking the abdomen
- \* Examining the affected arm for lymphedema

Physical exams and an updated medical history should be given every three to six months for the first three years after the primary treatment, then once or twice yearly for the next two years and annually thereafter depending on your cancer.

## KNOW YOUR BODY

**Breast Self Exams (BSE):** 40% of breast cancers are discovered by women or their partners not necessarily from using BSE techniques. Knowing the landscape of their body and noticing slight changes can send women to the doctor for a mammogram. Checking one's breasts can help detect breast cancers that mammograms miss.

# October

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### Reading Fruit or Vegetable Food Labels

Here are the basics:

**1. Conventionally grown with the use of pesticides.** There are only four numbers in the PLU. The last four letters of the PLU code tell what kind of vegetable or fruit. Bananas are labeled with the code 4011.

**2. Genetically Modified fruit or vegetables.** There are five numbers in the PLU code, and the number starts with "8". Genetically modified fruits and vegetables trump being organic. So, it is possible to eat organic produce that are grown from genetically modified seeds. A GMO banana would be: 84011

**3. Organically Grown: There are five numbers in the PLU code, and the number starts with "9".** Grown organically and is not genetically modified. An organic banana would be: 94011

Beginning in October foods will be labeled as belonging to one of four categories:

**100% Organic:** Made with 100% organic ingredients

**Organic:** Made with at least 95% organic ingredients

**Made With Organic Ingredients:**

Made with a minimum of 70% organic ingredients. Strict restrictions on the remaining 30% including no GMOs (genetically modified organisms)

**Products with less than 70% organic ingredients** may list organically produced ingredients on the side panel of the package. May not make any organic claims on the front of the package.

## Diet: What To Eat And Why

**Studies point to the importance of a healthy diet combined with exercise for cancer risk reduction.** What you eat-and don't eat-can have a powerful effect on your health, including your risk of cancer. Without knowing it, you may be eating foods that fuel cancer, while neglecting the powerful foods and nutrients that can protect you. The less processed these foods are-the less they've been cooked, peeled, mixed with other ingredients, stripped of their nutrients, or otherwise altered from the way they came out of the ground-the better. Different foods may interact with specific genes to increase or decrease the risk of common diseases such as type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers by modifying gene expression.

**Eat a Plant-based Diet:** Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes (beans and peas) provide fiber that breaks down more slowly in your system. Choosing whole foods and complex carbohydrates instead of refined foods improves blood sugar levels, digestion, and decreases the risk of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Whole foods contain vitamins, minerals antioxidants and enzymes. Refined foods, like white flour and white sugar lack these nutrients, and studies suggest that these simple carbohydrates may increase cancer risk by increasing glucose and insulin levels. High insulin levels have been linked to a higher incidence of certain cancers as well as diabetes and heart disease.

A nice visual reminder is to aim for a plate of food that is filled at least two-thirds vegetables, beans, fruit or with whole grains. Dairy products, fish, and meat should take up no more than a third of the plate and should be organic.

**You don't need to go completely vegetarian.** Focus on adding "whole" foods, which are foods close to their original form. Try to minimize or reduce the amount of processed foods you eat. Eat an apple instead of drinking a glass of apple juice, for example. Enjoy a bowl of oatmeal with raisins instead of an oatmeal raisin cookie.

**Eat Some Protein:** Organic is preferred because of the hormones and antibiotics fed to animals that accumulate in the fat. Good sources of protein are Grass fed organic meat, Organic eggs, Organic dairy, Grains + beans, Seafood. NOTE: Seafood can be high in heavy metals and toxins like PCB's. Best choices have the lowest level of mercury and can be eaten more than once a week. (Seafood selector; best & worst choices: www.oceansalive.org)

**Consume Healthy Fats:** Fats are the building blocks of hormones. They control the balance of inflammatory and anti-inflammatory compounds in the body. Omega 3 fats help to decrease inflammation, which decreases your risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and neurological diseases. Deep sea fish, fish oils, free range/organic poultry, grass fed meats and flax seeds are high in Omega 3 fatty acids. Avoid trans-fatty acids and hydrogenated oils. Since pesticides and herbicides are stored in fat, use unrefined organic oils like olive, flax, coconut and nut oils, and moderate amounts of organic butter.

### Nutritional Approaches to Improving Hormone Balance

- Eat more phytoestrogens (flax, 1-2 cups of cruciferous vegetables daily)
- Eat organic foods to minimize intake of xenoestrogens, hormones, antibiotics
- Use filtered water (reverse osmosis) to eliminate xenoestrogens
- Use garlic to help with detoxification
- Consume a high-fiber diet (25-50 grams a day, including legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, vegetables, fruit)
- Increase intake of omega-3 fatty acids (small, non-predatory cold-water fish: wild salmon, sardines, herring) and flax seeds
- Balance glucose metabolism through a low glycemic load, high phytonutrient index

### Foods That Cause Hormonal Imbalance

- Saturated and trans fatty acids
- Processed foods
- Alcohol consumption
- Artificial sweeteners
- Dairy products
- Refined sugars and carbohydrates
- Exposure to environmental toxins
- Xenobiotics, antibiotics, and hormones in commercially raised livestock (meat & dairy)

**HIGH IN PESTICIDES:** Avoid these foods unless they are organic and you avoid up to 80 – 90% of pesticide exposure:

Strawberries	Cantaloupe	Celery	Cherries	Spinach
Bell Peppers	Green Beans	Apricots	Peaches	Apples

**Why eat organic:** Many pesticides and herbicides sprayed on fruits, vegetables and grains are "estrogen mimics" and can stimulate the growth of breast tumors. Organic food is grown without chemicals, hormones or antibiotics and has been found to be higher in important nutrients than foods grown in commercially fertilized, nutrient-depleted soil. Organic eggs, dairy products and meats are free of the estrogen-like hormones and antibiotics fed to animals and stored in their fat.

**ALERT: Avoid foods high in arsenic.** These include: rice; fruit juices such as apple and grape juice. Vegetables accumulate arsenic when grown in contaminated soil. Clean vegetables thoroughly.

- To lower arsenic levels in rice: Rinse raw rice thoroughly before cooking, use a ratio of 6 cups water to 1 cup rice for cooking. Drain excess water.
- Use grains such as quinoa, barley, couscous, grits/polenta, bulgur wheat

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# November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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# Breast Cancer Advocacy: Moving Beyond Awareness

**B**reast cancer survivors, their families and friends care deeply about the future and want to make a difference. The opportunities to participate as a breast cancer advocate abound, both in number and type. Becoming an advocate helps us get through our breast cancer experiences and gain a feeling of control over our own healthcare.

Advocacy is anything from caring and support at the individual level to addressing issues at the local, state and federal levels. Some examples:

- Bring a meal, do an errand, help with chores, or drive a cancer patient to an appointment.
- As someone who has “been there,” provide personal emotional support and knowledge for those newly diagnosed.
- Become a Peer Support leader for a breast cancer support group.
- Bring the voice of the breast cancer survivor to researchers. This has improved the process of scientific research in many ways.
- Help to fundraise for your local breast cancer organization.

Political advocacy for breast cancer has helped breast cancer patients in numerous ways. Women now have more access to screening, diagnosis and better treatments. Breast cancer advocates have been instrumental in increasing federal funding for breast cancer research and in helping to pass laws like the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act of 2000, which established a program providing breast and cervical cancer treatment coverage to low-income, uninsured women. Advocates have called for a voice in policy and research decisions to ensure better, more effective treatments for breast cancer patients.

Most people are aware of the message “early detection saves lives” and the month of October’s staggering array of Pink Ribbon “cause marketing” promotional campaigns and company tie-ins, target every conceivable consumer item “for the Cure”. When these companies use known or suspected cancer causing ingredients in their products, which many — if not most — do, the practice becomes “pinkwashing”. These companies need to decide if they want to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Their supported research focuses primarily on detection and treatment with very little attention to primary prevention. Less than 10% of research dollars nationally looks for the cause or causes of breast cancer with a goal of prevention.

**You can make a difference! Ask questions before you buy products with pink ribbons and demand corporate accountability with letter writing and phone calls. Advocacy is a tool for change.** Early detection and better treatments are not enough. Despite doing everything that we now can, about 25% of the women who are diagnosed and treated for early-stage breast cancer will later learn that their cancer has spread to other organs. Learning to treat early breast cancer so that it doesn’t spread and to manage advanced breast cancer is essential, but, we must learn what causes breast cancer in the first place to ensure the health of future generations.

Advocates have changed the conversation, challenging corporations; the pharmaceutical industry; local, state and federal legislators; healthcare institutions and providers; health agencies and the media. Advocacy organizations such as The New York State Breast Cancer Network, Breast Cancer Action, Breast Cancer Fund, the National Breast Cancer Coalition, the Environmental Working Group and Silent Spring Institute, among others, have waged many effective awareness campaigns, and have been instrumental in changes in corporate business practices and the introduction and/or passage of local and national legislation to protect the public from toxic exposures and inequities in medical care. Some examples are: the banning in New York State of endocrine disrupting Bisphenol-A (BPA) in infant and baby toys, bottles and feeding products, the removal of the artificial hormone rGBH, from Yoplait by General Mills, The Safe Chemicals Act 2010 and the Toxic Chemicals Safety Act 2010 in Congress, the regulations of certain insurance practices and legal challenge to the patenting of genes by pharmaceutical companies.

**Become an advocate now!** Advocate for yourself or a loved one and gather information based on evidence to aid in informed decision making. Help your family and friends reduce their risk of breast cancer through healthy behavioral and lifestyle changes.

**Join with others** through local organizations, such as Breast Cancer Options; state organizations or national organizations, such as those mentioned here to work with community leaders and elected officials at all levels to advocate for regulations and laws that benefit cancer patients.

### JOIN US!

Attend **Breast Cancer Advocacy Day** on Tuesday, March 12, 2013 in Albany, NY with *Breast Cancer Options* and the *New York State Breast Cancer Network*. You will meet other advocates, learn more about advocacy and find out what you can do to help. Please check [www.BreastCancerOptions.org](http://www.BreastCancerOptions.org) for details.

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### Resources

- New York State Breast Cancer Support and Education Network [www.nysbcscen.org](http://www.nysbcscen.org)
- National Breast Cancer Coalition [www.natlbcc.org](http://www.natlbcc.org)
- Breast Cancer Action [www.bcaction.org](http://www.bcaction.org)
- The Breast Cancer Fund [www.breastcancerfund.org](http://www.breastcancerfund.org)

# December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	Christmas Eve 24	Christmas Day 25	Kwanzaa 26	27	28
29	30	New Year's Eve 31				

845-339-HOPE  
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**If you have breasts or know someone who does...**

**Please show your support.**

Breast Cancer Options is a grassroots, nonprofit organization and the largest provider of peer support, advocacy and education services in the Hudson Valley. The current fiscal crisis has affected our budget and we need your help.

**We rely more than ever upon individual contributions to accomplish our work.**

Please send a check payable to **Breast Cancer Options**  
101 Hurley Avenue, Suite 10  
Kingston, NY 12401

...or make a credit card donation  
Online on our web site  
[www.breastcanceroptions.org](http://www.breastcanceroptions.org)

...or call us at  
**845-339-HOPE (4673)**

*Thank you*

Breast Cancer Options is a non-profit,  
tax exempt 501(c)3 corporation.

**All donations are tax-deductible  
and truly appreciated!**

*All of our services are free.*

## About Breast Cancer Options

**Breast Cancer Options** (BCO) is an organization of breast cancer survivors, advocates and healthcare professionals who understand that when you are diagnosed with breast cancer, you are suddenly faced with some of the most important decisions you will ever make about your own healthcare. When you explore your options, we want you to understand:

- \* You do not have to face all this, including physician visits, by yourself.
- \* You are important and deserve answers. We will help you get them.
- \* What information and sources are credible and reliable.
- \* Which lifestyle changes and complementary therapies can be integrated in treatment.

### Support

- \* **Companion/Advocate Program**—Trained, knowledgeable and sympathetic breast cancer survivors, upon request, accompany newly diagnosed patients to medical visits.
- \* **Peer-led support groups**—Community-based in Ulster, Dutchess, Greene, Columbia, Sullivan and Orange counties. See our web site or call for locations and time.
- \* **Telephone and e-mail consultations**—We offer a reliable resource, answering questions and suggesting good sources for more information.
- \* **Peer-to-Peer Mentoring**—Talk to someone who has gone through the same experience.
- \* **Camp Lightheart**—A free sleepover camp for the children of breast cancer survivors.
- \* **Acupuncture Clinics for women in treatment**—5 free treatment. Funded by a grant from The Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation.

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### Education/Information

- \* **Annual Healthy Lifestyles Calendar**
- \* **Breast Cancer Forums:** Informational seminars on breast cancer held throughout the Mid-Hudson Valley supported by local legislators, hospitals, libraries and other interested groups.
- \* **BCO News e-mail updates:** Disseminated weekly to Breast Cancer Survivors and Healthcare Professionals all over the world.
- \* **Breast Cancer Options web site** offers a variety of up-to-date information and resources.
- \* **Annual Complementary Medicine Conference:** Top professionals in complementary and integrative therapies speak and present workshops on the most current modalities.
- \* **Healthy Lifestyles Program:** A series of workshops to look at the ways we can make small, easy changes in our daily lives to improve our health after a cancer diagnosis

### Advocacy

- \* BCO is an advocate for breast cancer patients at the regional, state and national levels.
- \* We can help with referrals for insurance and legal problems.
- \* BCO is a member of the New York State Breast Cancer Network.  
*All of our services are free.*

**[www.BreastCancerOptions.org](http://www.BreastCancerOptions.org)**

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## 16 Steps To A Healthier Life For You And Your Family

A growing body of evidence shows that healthy lifestyle factors like a good diet and regular exercise provide significant benefits, possibly offering protection against cancer recurrences about on a par with chemotherapy and the newer hormonal and drug treatments. If you combine these risk-reducing habits and also limit your exposure to toxins you will benefit even more.

- 1. Exercise!** Breast cancer patients will be 50 percent less likely to die from the disease than sedentary women if they exercise on a regular basis. Women undergoing treatments for breast cancer benefit from moderate intensity, regular aerobic activity.
- 2. Control your weight.** Weight is a bit confusing. If you are overweight before menopause, your risk of breast cancer is lower than average. If you are overweight after menopause, your risk of breast cancer is higher than average.
- 3. Spend eight hours a night in darkness** to encourage normal melatonin levels. The hormone melatonin is released at night and has cancer-fighting properties. It's the reason you get sleepy when it's dark and research indicates that melatonin also puts cancer cells to sleep. Make sure you get regular exposure to bright light during the daytime.
- 4. Eat an organically grown diet** whenever possible. Your diet should contain fruits and vegetables, complex carbohydrates, organic protein and healthy fats. Breast cancer has been linked to some pesticides used on non-organic fruits and vegetables and estrogen-like hormones used in raising livestock.
- 5. Avoid fried, char-broiled, or barbecued** as forms of cooking. The Char contains PAHs polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons that cause mammary tumors in animals. Can't give it up? Take an aspirin with your char-broiled meal, as studies suggest that aspirin may negate the potentially harmful effects of flame-broiled foods.
- 6. Avoid bleached products,** i.e. coffee filters, paper, napkins, toilet tissue, tampons and sanitary napkins. Using bleached coffee filters alone can result in a lifetime exposure to dioxin that exceeds acceptable risks. The FDA detected dioxins and dozens of other substances in conventional tampons.
- 7. Avoid using chlorine bleach** for household cleaning or laundry. The chlorine in your dish-washing detergent mixes with steam to create a gas. When the dishwasher is opened, this toxic gas is released. Hydrogen peroxide bleaches are a safe alternative; they break down into water and oxygen.
- 8. Drink filtered or bottled water,** not city water that contains chlorine and fluoride. A simple water filter can now serve as a valuable safeguard against toxic substances and cancer.
- 9. Do not use pesticides or herbicides** on your lawn or garden. They mimic estrogen, a known breast cancer risk factor. A cup of salt in a gallon of vinegar will kill weeds.
- 10. Reduce or eliminate purchase of plastic products.** Some plastics leach hormone-disrupting chemicals into whatever they come in contact with. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastics are dangerous and used in toys that children put in their mouths, so keep an eye out for nontoxic toys.
- 11. Use personal care products without chemicals** like parabens or phthalates. They disrupt normal hormone function and are found in many personal care products.
- 12. Avoid alcohol.** Regular, moderate use of alcohol affects the levels of important female hormones. Two to five drinks per day may be associated with a 40% higher rate of breast cancer than in non-drinkers. Women who choose to drink can lower their risk of developing breast cancer by taking 400 mcg. of folic acid or eat a folate rich diet.
- 13. Use wet cleaning rather than dry cleaning** which contains PERC (perchloroethylene). If you must use traditional dry cleaning, open the plastic bags on your clothing and air them out before putting them in a closet or on your body.
- 14. Avoid PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers)** found in electronic equipment and furniture. They are endocrine disruptors linked to reproductive damage, affect thyroid hormones and may cause cancer. They are flame retardants often added to polyurethane foam, various plastics, and electronics equipment. Choose carpet pads, bedding, cushions, and upholstered furniture made from natural fibers including wool, cotton, and hemp.
- 15. Learn how to handle stress.** Levels of the stress hormone cortisol rise with increased stress. High cortisol levels suppress immune response by reducing natural killer cell activity. These cells are important in surveillance against malignant cells and for destroying viruses and tumor cells.
- 16. Learn to read labels;** become an informed consumer.