

Cancer is a group of diseases characterized by uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. When cancer starts in the breast, it is called breast cancer, which is the second leading cause of cancer death in Indiana, following lung cancer. Approximately one in 1,000 Hoosier women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year.

## **Female Breast Cancer — 2008**

- **Incidence:** 4,238 new cases; after increasing during 1995-1999, incidence rates decreased by 15 percent from 1999 to 2008.
- **Mortality:** 917 deaths.
- **Disparities:** The incidence rate for 2008 was not statistically different between black and white females (111.4 compared to 116.7 cases per 100,000 women, respectively). However, the breast cancer mortality rate was almost 18 percent higher for black females than for white (27.7 compared to 23.6 deaths per 100,000 females).

## **Early Detection**

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), screening is defined as testing asymptomatic individuals for a particular disease. Screening can help find cancer in an early stage where there is a better chance of being cured. Early detection of cancer through screening has been shown to reduce mortality from cancers of the colon and rectum, breast, and uterine cervix.

Breast cancer screening includes mammograms, clinical breast exams (CBE), and in some cases, breast MRIs.

## **American Cancer Society Screening Guidelines**

- Yearly mammograms starting at age 40 and continuing as long as a woman is in good health.
- CBE about every three years for women in their 20s and 30s and every year for women 40 and older.
- Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider. Breast self-exam is an option for women starting in their 20s.

## **Early Detection: Where Are We Now?**

### **Percent of Females who Received Mammograms within the Past Year by Age Group—2010**

(Source: Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System)



The early stages of breast cancer typically show no symptoms. However, as cancer progresses, some symptoms may be noticed such as: a lump or thickened breast tissue, changes in breast size or shape, changes in texture of the skin of the breast or nipple, including dimpling or puckering, and nipple discharge.

## **Common Risk Factors**

- Aging.
- Not having children, or having your first child later in life.
- Not breastfeeding.
- Having a personal history of breast cancer or certain benign diseases, such as atypical ductal hyperplasia.
- Having close relatives (such as a mother, sister, or daughter) who have had breast cancer.
- Being overweight, particularly after menopause.
- Using hormone replacement therapy for many years.
- Using oral contraceptives.
- Drinking alcohol.
- Being physically inactive.

## **Prevention: What Can You Do?**

- Exercise at least 150 minutes per week.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Avoid using hormone replacement therapy (HRT), or find out the risks and benefits of HRT and if it is right for you.
- Limit alcohol intake.
- Know your family history.

## **Indiana Cancer Consortium (ICC)**

- The ICC is a statewide network of over 100 agencies including the Indiana State Department of Health. Their mission is to reduce the cancer burden in Indiana through the development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive plan that addresses cancer across the continuum from prevention through palliation. Become a member at [www.indianacancer.org](http://www.indianacancer.org).
- The ICC's *Indiana Cancer Control Plan 2010-2014* provides a roadmap for cancer control in the six following focus areas:
  - Primary Prevention – Decrease cancer risk through lifestyle and behavioral interventions.
  - Early Detection – Increase early detection and appropriate screenings for cancer.
  - Treatment – Promote informed decision making and utilization of appropriate cancer treatment.
  - Quality of Life – Improve quality of life for cancer patients, survivors and their families.
  - Data – Increase the quantity, quality and availability of complete and timely cancer and related data.
  - Advocacy – Advocate for cancer-related policy initiatives.

## **Resources and References**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic\\_info](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info)
- American Cancer Society: [www.cancer.org/Cancer/BreastCancer/DetailedGuide/breast-cancer-detection](http://www.cancer.org/Cancer/BreastCancer/DetailedGuide/breast-cancer-detection)
- Indiana State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Reports: 2010
- Indiana State Cancer Registry 11 Sept 2011
- American Cancer Society Guidelines for the Early Detection of Cancer: <http://www.cancer.org/Healthy/FindCancerEarly/CancerScreeningGuidelines/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer>
- American Cancer Society Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Facts & Figures 2009: [http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@nho/documents/document/860009web\\_6-4-09.pdf.pdf](http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@nho/documents/document/860009web_6-4-09.pdf.pdf)