What is breast cancer?

To put it simply, breast cancer occurs when cells within the breast tissue divide and grow abnormally. The most common types of breast cancer are found in the breast’s milk-producing glands (the lobules) and the milk ducts. When the cancer is invasive, the cancerous cells have spread from the lobules and ducts to surrounding tissue and possibly to other parts of the body. In noninvasive cancer (carcinoma in situ), the cancerous cells have stayed where they originated and have not spread to surrounding tissue.²

We see it everywhere: on bumper stickers, car magnets, lapels and T-shirts. The pink ribbon is a well-known symbol that has brought increasing awareness to a serious disease.

It seems that all of us know someone who has had breast cancer – a neighbor, a friend, a mother or a sister. And it’s no wonder. About one in eight women in the U.S. will develop invasive breast cancer in her lifetime. Not only that, it’s the second most common cancer found in U.S. women.¹
Male Breast Cancer

Though breast cancer is found overwhelmingly in women, men can develop it too. In the United States, that ratio is one man to every 100 women who are diagnosed. It was estimated in 2008 that almost 2,000 men would be diagnosed with the disease and about 450 would die of it.10

Did You Know?

Breast cancer rarely occurs during pregnancy. But it’s the most common cancer detected in pregnant women, occurring in about 1 in 3,000 pregnancies. Because breasts become larger and more sensitive during pregnancy, it’s more difficult for women to notice lumps in the breast. For this reason, it’s vital that pregnant women practice monthly breast self-exams and to get routine clinical exams during pregnancy.11

Resources

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has a hotline staffed by specialists who can answer your questions and send you booklets, fact sheets and other materials. You can reach the hotline at 800-4-CANCER. For access to printed materials and other information on the NCI website, go to cancer.gov. Visit Susan G. Komen for the Cure at komen.org for the latest information on diagnosis, treatment, risk factors, screening and more. You’ll also find educational materials and interactive tools.

Visit anthem.com for more ways to get healthy – and stay healthy.

The information contained in this flier is provided for educational purposes only, and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please consult your doctor for medical advice about changes that may affect your health and before taking any medications or beginning any lifestyle program. Some services may not be covered under your health plan. Please refer to your Group Certificate of Coverage and Schedule of Benefits for details concerning benefits, procedures and exclusions.

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