



WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES AND RISK FACTORS FOR BREAST CANCER

Risk factors are things that can put you at high risk of breast cancer and determine how often you should get tests to check for cancer. All women should know what risk factors they have, especially women with disabilities.

Having a risk factor for breast cancer, or even several, doesn't mean you'll get breast cancer. But, if you have one or more of the following risk factors, as many women with disabilities do, talk to your health care provider about getting screened earlier and/or more often than recommended for women without risk factors.

Most women who develop breast cancer have NO risk factors.

Here are some overall risk factors for developing breast cancer

- Age: your risk increases as you get older.
- Birth Control Pill Use: Current or recent use of birth control pills slightly increases risk of breast cancer.
- Early Menstruation (Periods): women starting menstruation early (before age 12) is linked to a small increase in breast cancer.
- Gender: being a woman is the most important risk factor.
- Genes: inherited gene mutations have been linked to breast cancer (BRACA1, BRACA2, p53, CHEK2, ATM, PALB2).

- Late Menopause: women going through menopause later (after age 55).
- Menopausal Hormone Therapy (MHT): Estrogen plus progesterin increase risk of both developing and dying from breast cancer.
- Personal History: a woman with cancer in one breast has an increased risk of developing a new cancer in the other breast or in another part of the same breast.
- Previous Chest Radiation: women who received chest radiation as treatment for another cancer or for a disability are at increased risk for breast cancer.
- Race: African-American women are slightly less likely to develop breast cancer than White women but are more likely to die of this cancer.
- Women who give birth to first child at age 35 or younger tend to have a protective benefit from pregnancy.



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Here are some risk factors that are related to how you live and your lifestyle

- Alcohol: linked to increased risk of developing breast cancer

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- Being overweight or obese: found to increase breast cancer risk, especially after menopause
- Birth Control Pill Use – current or recent birth control pills slightly increases risk of breast cancer.
- Family History – Breast, ovarian or prostate cancer. A mother, father, sister, or daughter with breast cancer or a mother, sister daughter with ovarian cancer, increases the risk of breast cancer. A father or son with prostate cancer may increase risk of breast cancer.
- Lack of physical activity - regular exercise appears to lower breast cancer risk by about 10-20 percent.
- Hormone therapy after menopause: used to help reduce menopause symptoms and prevent osteoporosis (thinning of bones). This can also increase the risk of getting breast cancer and the chances of dying from breast cancer.

Women with disabilities need to be concerned about breast cancer because they may have these risk factors

- Early menstruation
- Previous chest radiation/or radiation
- Never having children
- Obesity & overweight
- Physical inactivity
- Being a woman

REMEMBER—know your breast cancer risk factors and talk about them with your health care provider. To learn about factor that affect breast cancer risk, visit:

ww5.komen.org/AboutBreastCancer/RiskFactors/FactorsAffectingBreastCancerRisk/FactorsAffectingBreastCancerRisk.html.



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