



Better Safe!

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

Keeping Abreast of New Technology

Look for these new breast cancerscreening advances in a healthcare center near you.

Mammacare® is a system that teaches women a thorough, systematic, and efficient method of examining breast tissue. By utilizing the pads of the fingers, a model, and a video, women can become proficient in breast self-exams (BSE).

Full-field digital mammography offers improved mammograms. Similar to conventional mammograms, low energy x-rays are passed through the breast and recorded by an electronic digital detector. Conventional mamograms use film to record the images.

R2 ImageChecker is a system that offers a computerized "second opinion" for mammogram results. Experts say it can improve the accuracy of a mammogram by at least 15 percent.

Ductal Lavage is a washing procedure that can identify cancerous and precancerous cells in the milk ducts of the breast. The procedure has been dubbed the "Pap smear for the breast" because of its nonsurgical approach to identifying abnormal cells.

BREAST CANCER *Demystified*

By Fern Carness, MPH, RN

There are countless, misleading myths regarding the nature of breast cancer. For the sake of your health it's important to know the difference between myth and reality. Below are some of the common breast cancer myths, as well as a dose of reality to help set the record straight.

Myth vs. Reality

MYTH: Mammograms are 100 percent accurate.

REALITY: Few things in life are 100 percent accurate; the same is true for mammograms. If you have a normal mammogram, but still feel a lump, insist on further follow-up.

MYTH: You're not at risk for breast cancer if you don't have a family history.

REALITY: More than 80 percent of newly diagnosed breast cancers are found in women with NO family history. Regular screenings are important for women of all ages.

MYTH: Breast cancer is an older woman's disease.

REALITY: Not exactly. Over the course of the last 30 years, the average age of a woman diagnosed with breast cancer has dropped by 10 years.

MYTH: A mastectomy ensures that cancer is gone forever.

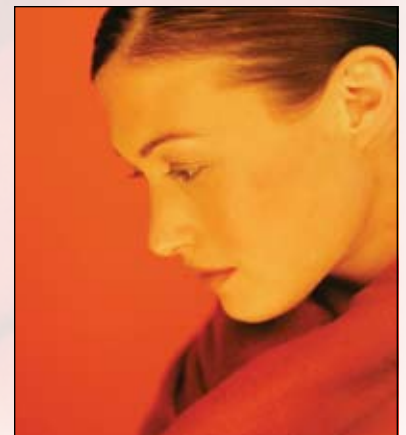
REALITY: A mastectomy can be an effective treatment, but it can't guarantee lifelong remission. A small portion of women will experience a reoccurrence or have cancer that spreads to other parts of the body.

MYTH: Reconstructive surgery will give you back your breast.

REALITY: Plastic surgeons can work wonders, but they can't fool Mother Nature. When considering surgery, be sure to check references and be clear about expectations.

MYTH: There is nothing I can do to prevent breast cancer.

REALITY: As with most cancers, there are actually a number of steps you can take to reduce your risk. In fact, according to the New England Journal of Medicine, at least four hours of moderate exercise per week has been shown to decrease breast cancer risk in pre-menopausal women by as much as 50 percent.





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Alzheimer's and Other Dementias What Can You Do?

By David Gobble, PhD

Alzheimer's and related conditions can have a particularly devastating effect on a person's quality of life. Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia often cloud a person's memory and severely limit their functional ability. And though it receives much less attention than other serious diseases and conditions, Alzheimer's alone affects 4.5 million Americans today. Despite the fact that Alzheimer's disease is associated with family history and age, there are a number of steps you can take to gain control over some of the risk factors.

Exercise For Mind And Body

Your brain is similar to a muscle in that, the more you use it, the stronger it gets. And when you don't use it, you quickly lose it. By constantly stimulating the brain with challenging learning activities, you'll continue to further develop complex brain tissue, which can help protect you from early dementia.

An active, healthy lifestyle combined with a good diet also lays a solid foundation for preventing Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Keep the following risk factors in mind when it comes to measuring your risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias. If you have any of the risk factors below, find ways to increase your activity—both physically and mentally.

- Family history of Alzheimer's or other dementia
- Fifty years of age or older
- Work/career that's not mentally challenging
- Irregular reading habits and mentally stimulating activities
- Poor diet
- Lack of regular physical activity
- Excess consumption of alcohol

Preparing For A Mentally Vibrant Long Life

Aging is a matter of growth and compromise. You have to find the right balance between activities that develop your health and activities that provide your mind and body a little rest from the rigors of life.

Three Keys To Mental And Physical Health

In addition to the recommendations explored in the accompanying article, the three keys outlined below will help you reduce your risk for the early onset of dementia and other forms of cognitive decline.

First, see your healthcare provider regularly. He or she can help you identify certain risk factors and provide you opportunities to change behaviors and reduce your risks.

Second, focus on eating a balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight, taking part in regular physical activity, and continually seeking involvement with family, friends, and your community.

Third, always search out opportunities for mental growth and physical challenges.

Incorporating the keys to mental and physical health will add spice and years to your life.



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