
NEWS RELEASE

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Start the Conversation About Breast Cancer Risk

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BISMARCK, N.D. — In observation of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) encourages women to start the conversation about breast cancer risk with their healthcare provider. About one in eight North Dakotan women will get breast cancer during their life. Breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer deaths for women in the state. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2016, 530 women will be diagnosed and 80 women will die from breast cancer in North Dakota. However, early detection, better treatment, and better follow-up care have made it possible for more women to survive breast cancer.

Breast cancer risk factors include age, a family history of breast cancer, and personal behaviors. Limiting alcohol consumption to less than one drink a day, keeping a healthy weight, staying physically active, and maintaining a balanced diet are steps women can take to possibly reduce risk of developing breast cancer. Furthermore, women can take advantage of breast cancer screening tests, which may help find cancers early when they are easiest to treat.

Talk with your doctor about your risk factors for breast cancer and find out when and how often breast cancer screening is appropriate for you.

“While most women are aware of breast cancer, many do not take the steps to detect the disease in its early stages,” said Susan Mormann, director of the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control for the NDDoH. “I encourage women to discuss their risk factors for breast cancer with their doctor. Together you can decide when to begin and how often to screen for breast cancer. This is something women can do to detect this disease earlier when it may be most treatable.”

For women who are concerned about the cost for cancer screening there are a number of options for financial assistance including *Women's Way* (www.ndhealth.gov/womensway), Medicaid Expansion (www.nd.gov/dhs/medicaidexpansion), and Marketplace insurance plans (www.healthcare.gov/marketplace).

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