

# Breast Cancer

## Early Detection Saves Lives

All women are at risk for breast cancer. Breast cancer cannot be prevented; however, studies show that early detection saves lives.

Women can protect themselves:

1. Mammograms: Women, age 40 (or as directed by a physician) should have annual mammograms.
2. Clinical Breast Exams: By a health care provider starting at age 20.
3. Learn the normal feel of their breasts, and check them regularly for changes.

### *What is Breast Cancer?*

Breast cancer is a malignant (cancerous) tumor that starts from cells of the breast. The disease occurs mostly in women, but men can get breast cancer as well.

The breast is made up of lobules, ducts, fatty and connective tissue, blood vessels and lymph vessels.

The most common type of breast cancer begins in the lining of the ducts and is called ductal carcinoma. Another type, called lobular carcinoma, arises in the lobules. There are other types of breast cancer, but they are very rare.



## ARE YOU AT RISK?

Risk factors are anything that increase your chance of getting a disease, such as cancer. Different cancers have different risk factors. Mary Bird Perkins is offering [www.mycancerrisk.com](http://www.mycancerrisk.com), a tool that estimates your risk of cancer and provides personalized tips for prevention. Anyone can use My Cancer Risk, but it's most accurate for those who have never had any type of cancer. If you are under 40, this tool cannot give an accurate estimate of your risk.



Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center's

# My Cancer Risk

An Online Risk Assessment Tool



## Screening & Early Detection

The earlier breast cancer is found, the better the chances that treatment will work. It is recommended that women with no symptoms follow these early detection guidelines:

**Mammograms:** Women age 40 and older should have mammograms every year. Women at increased risk (e.g. family history, genetic tendency, past breast cancer) should talk with their physician about the benefits and limitations of starting mammograms when they are younger.

**Clinical Breast Exam (CBE):** Women in their 20s and 30s should have a CBE as part of a regular exam by a health care provider preferably every 3 years. After age 40, women should have a breast exam by a health care provider every year.

**Breast Self Exam (BSE):** Women should learn the normal feel of their breasts and check them regularly for any changes.

For more information about mammograms and breast examinations, contact your health care provider or to find a free breast cancer screening for women without insurance, call the C.A.R.E. Network at

**(225) 215-1234 or (888) 616-4687  
or visit [www.marybird.org](http://www.marybird.org)**

*If detected & treated early,  
the 5-year survival rate  
for localized  
breast cancer is 98%.*

## What are the symptoms of Breast Cancer?

Early stage breast cancer usually does not cause pain. In fact, when breast cancer first develops, there may be no symptoms at all. But as the cancer grows, it can cause changes that women should watch for:

- A lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area;
- A change in the size or shape of the breast;
- A discharge from the nipple; or
- A change in the color or feel of the skin of the breast, areola or nipple (dimpled, puckered or scaly).

A woman should see her doctor if she notices any of these changes. Most often, they are not cancer, but only a doctor can tell for sure.



## Get Active & Reduce Your Breast Cancer Risk With Exercise

Studies show that exercise has real benefits for preventing breast cancer. Physically active women have up to a 40 percent reduced risk of developing breast cancer. Although a lifetime of regular, vigorous activity is thought to be of greatest benefit, women who occasionally engage in physical activity also experience a reduced risk.

*Community education, early detection and awareness are a critical part of Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center's strategy in the fight against cancer. With this in mind the Center developed the C.A.R.E. Network (Cancer Support Services, Awareness and Education, Research and Early Detection) which is working to reduce cancer incidence and mortality in southeast Louisiana and to improve the quality of life for those affected by cancer.*



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For more information call the C.A.R.E. Network at (225) 215-1234 or (888) 616-4687