



BREAST CANCER

AWARENESS MONTH

Fight Together



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Breast Cancer Awareness Month occurs every year, from October 1 to October 31. It is the time of year to increase awareness of breast cancer and emphasize ways to detect it early and support those who are affected by breast cancer.

- **Breast Cancer Awareness Month began in October 1985 as an awareness campaign by the American Cancer Society.**
- **In 1992, the pink ribbon became the symbol of breast cancer to symbolize hope and awareness that unites people together.**
- **Expanded into a worldwide effort to educate communities, support patients and survivors, and honor those who have lost their lives to the disease.**
- **The breast cancer death rate in the United States has dropped significantly by 44%.**



Risks for African Americans



Age and Gender

Breast Cancer is more common in people assigned female at birth, although men can develop it too. Risk increases with age.

Family History and Genetics

Having a close family member, such as a mother, sister, or daughter, diagnosed with breast cancer increases your risk, especially if they were diagnosed at a young age. Inherited changes in genes such as BRCA1 and BRCA2 can also increase risk.



Lifestyle Factors

Drinking alcohol, smoking, eating only red meat and processed foods, not eating healthy, and being physically inactive can increase the risk of breast cancer.

Risks for African Americans



Race

Among women younger than 40, breast cancer is much more common in Black women than in women of other races. Black women in America face a lack of access to healthcare screenings and education, which contributes to the breast cancer mortality rate. Without the ability to be treated and be aware of the possibility of having breast cancer due to their race, black women have a higher mortality rate from breast cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, Black women are 41% more likely to die from breast cancer and have a 5-year survival rate for every stage of the diagnosis, but 82% of black women live 5 years after their

Notable Black Women Who Championed Breast Cancer Awareness

Dr. Jane Cooke Wright



Dr. Jane Cooke Wright became known as the Godmother of Chemotherapy, as she was a surgeon, cancer researcher, and educator who started the use of chemotherapy as a way to make cancer treatment more accessible to others, especially for breast cancer. Dr. Wright paved the way for a generation of Black researchers to save lives, and her work continues to serve as a foundation for modern cancer treatment. Dr. Wright was the first woman president of the New York Cancer Society, a founding member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, and the only African American on that board. She passed away in 2013.

Notable Black Women Who Championed Breast Cancer Awareness

Audre Lorde

Audre Lorde, who was a writer, professor, philosopher, intersectional feminist, poet, and civil rights activist, was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1980 at age 44. Lorde became the first woman to vocally express opposition to society's views on whether women with mastectomies should wear a prosthetic or have reconstructive surgery. Lorde's writing brought survivors who felt isolated together in support and solidarity. She passed away in 1992.



Katrece Nolen's Story



At 38 years old, Katrece Nolen was diagnosed with stage 3 inflammatory breast cancer in 2013. Her symptoms were initially mistaken for a breast infection, and her mammogram did not detect cancer. As her symptoms worsened, she demanded answers and advocated to be seen by a specialist. After experiencing isolation from her diagnosis, Katrece founded a mission to find 100 Black women who survived inflammatory breast cancer and build a community, raise awareness, and show others that long-term survival is possible. Her story emphasizes the importance of being heard, finding support, and advocating for your health.

Read Katrece's full story in our bio via the Linktree.



RESOURCES



nationalbreastcancer.org

National Breast Cancer Foundation

In October, the National Breast Cancer Foundation is providing breast health information, ways to educate, and connecting women with the help they need to face this diagnosis. As a patient and/or survivor, you can share your story and support others going through, or who have gone through, similar challenges. Offering hope and ways to support goes a long way.

American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society will inform you about the types of breast cancer that you may have, early detection of it, treatment options for breast reconstruction surgery, information about being a breast cancer survivor, and ways to donate to those in need of care, research, and treatment.



cancer.org

Do your research and educate yourself about ways to prevent and survive breast cancer, work with doctors who want to help with the decision-making process, do breast self-checks every month, get screened, know your family history to know if you have a family history of breast cancer, and talk to survivors.

Wearing Pink Initiative

Every Wednesday, we ask everyone to wear pink during Breast Cancer Awareness Month to support survivors and people who are fighting the disease. It shows solidarity and lets anyone who is affected by breast cancer know they are not alone.

Upcoming Breast Cancer Awareness Events

- October 6th - Line Dancing Night Collab with Sisterhood
- October 23rd - Breast Cancer Walk



