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REGULAR SCREENINGS AND EARLY DETECTION KEY IN BREAST CANCER FIGHT



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Tallahassee, Fla. – October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Florida Department of Health encourages all women to learn about their risk and get regular mammograms. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in Florida with more than 13,500 women diagnosed in 2013. Governor Rick Scott has proclaimed October as [Breast Cancer Awareness month](#) in Florida.

“While deaths from breast cancer in Florida have decreased, the risk for having breast cancer remains high for women age 65 and older,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “While Florida is dedicated to relieving the burden of breast cancer through extensive investments in cancer research, we recommend routine screening as the best way to save lives through earlier diagnosis and treatment.”

Women and men are both at risk for breast cancer; however, that risk increases with age. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, women should begin routine screening for breast cancer at the age of 50, and women under age 50 should consult their health care provider about screening. In men breast cancer occurs most commonly between the age of 60 and 70.

A mammogram is the best test for finding breast cancer early, sometimes detecting the disease up to three years before it can be felt. Though breast cancer may not always present signs and symptoms right away it can cause changes in the look and feel of the breast including:

- A new lump in the breast;
- A lump that has changed in size;
- A change in the size and shape of the breast;
- Pain in the breast or nipple that does not go away;
- Flaky, red or swollen skin anywhere on the breast;
- A nipple that is very tender or that turns inward; and
- Blood or any other type of fluid coming from the nipple that is not milk when nursing a baby.

Several resources for breast cancer screening are available to women in Florida:

- Medicare insurance provides mammograms to women age 65 or older without a copay (1-800-633-4277).
- The Florida Department of Health offers a limited number of screenings to uninsured women of low income who qualify through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. For more information contact the Florida Department of Health in your county, call the American Cancer Society National Hotline (1-800-465-6636) or visit the [website](#).
- Susan G. Komen for the Cure (1-877-465-6636) provides mammograms for low income women under age 50 in parts of the state.

The department continues to work to find a cure for breast cancer, funding nearly \$2.5 million in breast cancer research through the biomedical research program this year.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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