

Myths and facts BREAST CANCER



Myth #1

You can only get breast cancer if you have a family member who had breast cancer.

Fact #1: Most people with breast cancer do not have a family history. Family traits (inherited) changes in genes can be passed down from parent to child. Breast cancers traits from family are only 5 to 10% of all breast cancers. Most breast cancers from family traits are caused by changes in BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes.

Myth #2

Mammograms give out a high amount of radiation. You should limit the number of mammograms you get.

Fact #2: A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast used to screen for breast problems. Many small tumors can be seen on a mammogram before they can be felt by a woman or her doctor. The amount of radiation is very small and isn't unsafe.

Myth #3

A mammogram is painful.

Fact #3: Some women find a mammogram uncomfortable. It lasts for just a few moments.

Myth #4

Getting a routine mammogram is not that important. If a woman sees her doctor for a breast exam, that is enough.

Fact #4: Cancer can be most easily treated and cured when it is found early. Routine

mammograms can lower a woman's chance of dying from breast cancer by finding cancer early, when it is small.

Myth #5

Breast self-exam (BSE) is just as good as getting a mammogram to screen for breast cancer.

Fact #5: Mammograms are recommended to screen for breast cancer. Women should talk to their doctors about whether BSE is right for them.

For more information

Visit kp.org/womenshealth

- Kaiser Permanente guide to women's health

Visit kp.org/mammogram

- Kaiser Permanente guide to mammograms

Call Kaiser Permanente Medical Advice

- Talk to your Medical Advice nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week at (703) 359-7878 or 1-800-777-7904. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call 711 or 1-800-201-7165. Ask the Relay operator to dial 1-855-632-8278.

Other resources

Visit cancer.gov

- National Cancer Institute

Visit cancer.org

- American Cancer Society

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care. If you have persistent medical problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your personal physician or member of your health care team.