

## Newman Memorial Hospital Supports Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Early Detection is the Key to Survival



When we think about October colors, we usually envision the vibrant reds, golds and greens of changing fall foliage or lots of orange and black for Halloween. But we should be thinking PINK! October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. A time to remind women everywhere about breast cancer prevention and screening. According to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide. One in eight women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. Each year in the U.S., more than 246,660 women are diagnosed with breast cancer and more than 40,000 women die from the disease. Although it is rare, men can also get breast cancer. An estimated 2,600 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and approximately 440 will die each year.

Some risk factors for breast cancer cannot be changed, such as being a woman over 50 years old, having a family history, being Caucasian, having dense breast tissue and having changes in your breast cancer genes. Only 30-40% of women diagnosed with breast cancer have known risk factors. Most women who are diagnosed with breast cancer (60-70%) have no family history or known risk factors. There are some environmental and lifestyle risk factors that **can** be managed. A sedentary lifestyle with little physical activity, being overweight and/or having a diet high in saturated fat and lacking fruits and vegetables can increase your risk of breast cancer. Frequent consumption of alcohol, radiation therapy to the chest before age 30 and taking combined hormone replacement therapy, as prescribed for menopause, all increase your risk for breast cancer.

Aside from managing your risk factors, the best thing you can do to protect yourself is to participate in routine screening. Screening cannot prevent breast cancer, but it can help find breast cancer earlier, when it is easier to treat. There are 3 types of screening: self-exam, clinical exam and mammogram. A self-exam should be completed once a month. The National

Breast Cancer Foundation's website has simple, easy-to-follow instructions for performing self-exams. Learn more at [www.nationalbreastcancer.org](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org)

If you are uncertain about how to perform a self-exam or find something that feels unusual during a self-exam, it is important to get a clinical exam. This is a breast examination that is performed by a physician. Dr. Danna Stuart, M.D. and Shandy Baggs, APRN-CNP of Newman Healthcare Associates, would be happy to assist women with a clinical breast exam. Call 580-938-5400 to schedule an appointment.

A mammogram is an x-ray exam of the breast. According to Dr. Stuart, M.D., women should begin to get their annual screening mammograms at age 40. Newman Memorial Hospital's Radiology Department performs screening mammography and all screenings are performed by a female technologist.

Heather Longhofer, R.T.(R), registered radiological technologist, from Newman Memorial Hospital says, "Having a regular mammogram is so important. I can't stress enough that it can be a life saver! Early detection is the best protection." Heather went on to say, "Mammograms in conjunction with self-breast exams increase the chance of early detection. It should be a part of every woman's routine health care." Newman Memorial Hospital performs screening mammograms Monday through Friday. On Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> they will be hosting another extended hours event, "Chests & Chocolate". Call today for more information or to schedule your mammogram!



Ryan Royal, R.T.(R), Director of Radiology & Heather Longhofer, R.T.(R)