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American Cancer Society Recommendations for the Early Detection of Breast Cancer

Finding breast cancer early and getting state-of-the-art cancer treatment are the most important strategies to prevent deaths from breast cancer. Breast cancer that's found early, when it's small and has not spread, is easier to treat successfully. Getting regular screening tests is the most reliable way to find breast cancer early. The American Cancer Society has screening guidelines for women at average risk of breast cancer, and for those at high risk for breast cancer.

What are screening tests?

The goal of screening tests for breast cancer is to find it before it causes symptoms (like a lump that can be felt). **Screening** refers to tests and exams used to find a disease in people who don't have any symptoms. **Early detection** means finding and diagnosing a disease earlier than if you'd waited for symptoms to start.

Breast cancers found during screening exams are more likely to be smaller and still confined to the breast. The size of a breast cancer and how far it has spread are some of the most important factors in predicting the **prognosis** (outlook) of a woman with this disease.

American Cancer Society screening recommendations for women at average breast cancer risk

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many elective procedures being put on hold, and this has led to a substantial decline in cancer screening. Health care facilities are providing cancer screening during the pandemic with many safety precautions in place.

These guidelines are for women at **average risk** for breast cancer. For screening purposes, a woman is considered to be at average risk if she doesn't have a personal history of breast cancer, a strong family history of breast cancer, or a genetic mutation known to increase risk of breast cancer (such as in a BRCA gene) and has not had chest radiation therapy before the age of 30.



Women between 40 and 44 have the option to start screening with a mammogram every year.

Women 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year.

Women 55 and older can switch to a mammogram every other year, or they can choose to continue yearly mammograms. Screening should continue as long as a woman is in good health and is expected to live at least 10 more years.

All women should understand what to expect when getting a mammogram for breast cancer screening – what the test can and cannot do.

American Cancer Society screening recommendations for women at high risk

Women who are at **high risk** for breast cancer based on certain factors should get a breast MRI and a mammogram every year, typically starting at age 30. Talk to your doctor about your risk level and the appropriate screening and frequency for you.

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If MRI is used, it should be in addition to, not instead of, a screening mammogram. This is because although an MRI is more likely to detect cancer than a mammogram, it may still miss some cancers that a mammogram would detect.

Mammograms

Mammograms are low-dose x-rays of the breast. Regular mammograms can help find breast cancer at an early stage, when treatment is most successful. A mammogram can often find breast changes that could be cancer years before physical symptoms develop. Results from many decades of research clearly show that women who have regular mammograms are more likely to have breast cancer found early, are less likely to need aggressive treatment like surgery to remove the breast (mastectomy) and chemotherapy and are more likely to be cured.

Clinical breast exam and breast self-exam

Research has not shown a clear benefit of regular physical breast exams done by either a health professional (clinical breast exams) or by women themselves (breast self-exams). There is very little evidence that these tests help find breast cancer early when women also get screening

mammograms. Most often when breast cancer is detected because of symptoms (such as a lump), a woman discovers the symptom during usual activities such as bathing or dressing. **Women should be familiar with how their breasts normally look and feel and should report any changes to a health care provider right away.**

(While the American Cancer Society does not recommend regular clinical breast exams or breast self-exams as part of a routine breast cancer screening schedule, this does not mean that these exams should never be done. In some situations, particularly for women at higher-than-average risk, for example, health care providers may still offer clinical breast exams, along with providing counseling about risk and early detection. And some women might still be more comfortable doing regular self-exams as a way to keep track of how their breasts look and feel. But it's important to understand that there is very little evidence that doing these exams routinely is helpful for women at average risk of breast cancer.)

Source: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/screening-tests-and-early-detection/american-cancer-society-recommendations-for-the-early-detection-of-breast-cancer.html>

Simple Steps for an Extra Safe Halloween

Kids love the magic of Halloween, but the COVID-19 pandemic means Halloween may be a bit different this year. You can still have fun! First and foremost, follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines to ensure your celebrations are safe.

If you do decide to go out on Halloween, don't forget these other safety tips as well.

Costume Safety

To help ensure adults and children have a safe holiday, the American Academy of Pediatrics has compiled a list of Halloween safety tips. Before Halloween arrives, be sure to choose a costume that won't cause safety hazards.

- All costumes, wigs and accessories should be fire-resistant
- If children are allowed out after dark, fasten reflective tape to their costumes and bags, or give them glow sticks
- When buying Halloween makeup, make sure it is nontoxic and always test it in a small area first
- Remove all makeup before children go to bed to prevent skin and eye irritation

When They're on the Prowl

Here's a scary statistic: Children are more than twice as likely to



be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day of the year. Lack of visibility because of low lighting at night also plays a factor in these incidents.

Keep these tips in mind when your children are out on Halloween night:

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- A responsible adult should accompany young children on the neighborhood rounds
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review a route acceptable to you
- Agree on a specific time children should return home
- Teach your children never to enter a stranger's home or car
- Instruct children to travel only in familiar, well-lit areas and stick with their friends
- Tell your children not to eat any treats until they return home
- Children and adults are reminded to put electronic devices down, keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/features/halloweenhealth/index.html>

Safety Tips for Motorists

NSC offers these additional safety tips for parents – and anyone who plans to be on the road during trick-or-treat hours:

- Watch for children walking on roadways, medians and curbs
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys carefully
- At twilight and later in the evening, watch for children in dark clothing
- Discourage new, inexperienced drivers from driving on Halloween

Source: <https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/autumn/halloween>

Global Handwashing Day



Global Handwashing Day is an annual global advocacy day dedicated to advocating for handwashing with soap as an easy, effective, and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

Global Handwashing Day was founded by the Global Handwashing Partnership, and is an opportunity to design, test, and replicate creative ways to encourage people to wash their hands with soap at critical times. Global Handwashing Day is celebrated every year on October 15th.

The first Global Handwashing Day was held in 2008, when over 120 million children around the world washed their hands with soap in more than 70 countries. Since 2008, community and national leaders have used Global Handwashing Day to spread the word about handwashing, build sinks and tippy taps, and demonstrate the simplicity and value of clean

hands. Since then, Global Handwashing Day has continued to grow. Global Handwashing Day is endorsed by governments, schools, international institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, private companies, individuals, and more.

The 2020 Global Handwashing Day theme is "Hand Hygiene for All." This year's theme follows the recent global initiative calling on all of society to scale up hand hygiene, especially through handwashing with soap. This year's theme reminds us that we must work toward universal access and practice of handwashing with soap for now and for a healthy future.

No matter your role, you can celebrate Global Handwashing Day.

Source: <https://globalhandwashing.org/global-handwashing-day/about-ghd/>

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