



[Susan G. Komen®](#)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

For nearly four decades now, the country has recognized October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It is a time annually devoted to educating everyone about breast cancer — including metastatic breast cancer (MBC) — and the importance of early detection and access to timely, high-quality care.

No matter who you are or where you live, breast cancer may touch your life. It's necessary to understand the warning signs of breast cancer, your risk of breast cancer and what's normal for you so you can take action if there are any changes in your breasts or underarm areas.

Since 1989, Susan G. Komen has helped drive down mortality rates from breast cancer thanks to our focus on early detection and improvements in treatment. However, that progress may be in jeopardy. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people delayed their regular breast cancer screening. The pandemic disrupted treatment and research progress.

And more progress is still needed. Through research, growing knowledge about breast cancer has led to new therapies and targeted treatments that improved outcomes for many people. It is research that brings hope to people facing this disease, especially those living with MBC. We need to ensure more treatment options are available for all people facing breast cancer, especially when treatments stop working.

The COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the inequities in breast cancer treatments for under-resourced communities across the country, as well as the inequity in treatment between Black and white women. Black women in the U.S. are about 40% more likely to die from breast cancer than white women.

That's why Susan G. Komen encourages you to dedicate this October as a time of action — both for yourself and others.

1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. That's one person every 2 minutes in the U.S.

The two most common risk factors of breast cancer are being born female and getting older.

In 2022, it is estimated that nearly 44,000 people in the U.S. will die from breast cancer.

Know Your Risk

Knowing your family history is lifesaving. Talk to a doctor about [your family history](#) and see how that history impacts your risk of breast cancer. You and your doctor can create a personalized plan to monitor for signs of the disease.

Get Screened

For those at average risk, have a [mammogram](#) every year starting at age 40. If you have any signs of breast cancer, finding it early and treating it early may save your life.

Know Your Normal

It's important to know what's [normal for you](#) so you can talk with your health care provider if something doesn't look or feel right.

Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Living a [healthy lifestyle](#) is within your control and may lower your risk of breast cancer. Maintain a healthy weight, limit alcohol intake and exercise regularly. It all matters when it comes to your overall health and risk of disease.

Take Action

There are many ways you can join our fight to save lives. Whether it's by supporting one of our generous [corporate partners](#); becoming an Advocacy Insider; fundraising through the [Race for the Cure](#), [MORE THAN PINK Walk](#) or our [Komen 3-Day](#); participating in a [fundraising challenge on Facebook](#) or [creating a fundraiser](#) of your own that is meaningful to you, your support can help us take action to invest in research and help those facing breast cancer today.

Need Help?

The [Komen Breast Care Helpline](#) is a free resource available for every person, including survivors, caregivers, those living with metastatic breast cancer and people who have not yet been touched by breast cancer but have questions about how to better care for themselves. The Helpline specialists and oncology social workers provide emotional support and guidance to resources and Komen's other Patient Care Center services, such as financial assistance, access to screening and diagnostic services, and patient navigation.

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Cancer Awareness in October

In October, the primary cancer awareness observance is **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, with additional focus on **Liver Cancer Awareness** and other health causes odphp.health.gov+2.

Main October Cancer Observances

- **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** – Held every October worldwide, this is the most prominent cancer awareness month. It began in 1985 when the American Cancer Society and Imperial Chemical Industries partnered to raise awareness, supported by former First Lady Betty Ford. The month's symbol is the **pink ribbon**, and activities include screenings, educational events, fundraising, and advocacy to encourage early detection odphp.health.gov+1.
- **Liver Cancer Awareness Month** – Also observed in October, this campaign highlights the importance of early detection and prevention of liver cancer cancerexplained.org+1.

Other Health Awareness in October

While not cancer-specific, October also includes:

- **Health Literacy Month** – Promotes understanding of health information to improve outcomes .
- **National Domestic Violence Awareness Month** – Addresses violence and its impact on individuals and families .
- **National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day (Oct 15)** – Highlights HIV/AIDS disparities in Latinx communities