



# 10 Things to Know about Breast Cancer

1. Don't Smoke, exercise, watch your diet, schedule annual screenings.
2. The American Cancer Society continues to recommend annual mammograms starting at age 40. Awareness and screening have led to more early detection.
3. Keep your body mass index less than 30. To calculate BMI, multiply your height in inches by that same number; divide that total into your weight in pounds; then multiply the total by 703. A person who is 5-foot-5 (65 inches) and weighs 150 pounds has a body mass index of 25. (Or Google "BMI calculator" for an online tool.)
4. Eat a diet high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and low in fat and red meat.
5. Regular exercise lowers the risk of breast cancer. Try to be physically active 30 minutes a day.
6. Avoid soy supplements which contain isoflavones – they can act like estrogen and stimulate the growth of certain types of breast cancer. Three or less servings of whole forms of soy, such as soy milk, tofu or edamame are OK.
7. A recent study of women at high risk for breast cancer found that, for those who smoked, the more they smoked and the longer they smoked, the more their risk increased.
8. MRI scans are not recommended as regular screening tools for the general population. But they are used, in addition to mammography, for screening high-risk patients and for diagnosis after mammograms that detect suspicious masses.
9. Women with dense breasts are at higher risk for breast cancer, and mammograms aren't as effective in detecting cancer in very dense breasts. Ask your doctor whether you have dense breasts and, if so, you might benefit from regular MRI scans or ultrasounds along with mammography.
10. Breast cancer risk goes up with age. The often-repeated statistic that "1 in 8" women will get breast cancer is calculated over a lifetime to age 95. The National Cancer Institute has created a Breast Cancer Risk Assessment Tool. Take the test at [www.cancer.gov/bcrisktool](http://www.cancer.gov/bcrisktool).



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