



WELLNEWS

OCTOBER 2009

OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Battling the Myths of Mammography

It's expensive. It hurts. And a couple of other beliefs you may be wrong about.

There are no sure things in medicine, but mammography comes close. Regular mammograms have been proven to find breast cancer at its earliest stages, when treatments are most effective. But many women fail to take advantage of these powerful, potentially lifesaving tests because of unfounded fears. If you're one of them, let's break down the barriers.

Barrier 1: I'm afraid insurance won't cover it.

If you have Medicare and are age 40 or older, Medicare pays for most of the cost of a screening mammogram every 12 months. If needed, Medicare will pay for a diagnostic mammogram at any time. There may also be low- and no-cost screening programs where you live.

Barrier 2: The test is too painful.

Yes, the test can be a bit uncomfortable, but most women don't consider it painful. During

mammography, your breast is placed on a special platform and compressed with a plastic paddle. Compression helps hold the breast still, evens out the breast tissue and allows lower doses of X-rays to be used. Because there is pressure on the breast, the American Cancer Society recommends you schedule the procedure one week after your period, when your breasts are least tender. If you feel pain, speak up. The technologist may be able to lower the compression and relieve some of the pressure on your breast. And remember that the actual X-ray takes less than one minute.

Barrier 3: I can't afford the co-payment/deductible.

Some state and local health programs and employers provide mammograms free or at low cost. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) coordinates the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. This program provides testing services, including clinical breast exams and mammograms, to low-income women throughout the United States.

You can learn more at the CDC's

Web site at www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/contacts.htm, or by calling the CDC at: 1-888-842-6355 (select option 7).

Information on low-cost or free mammography programs is also available through the National Cancer Institute at CANCER 1-800-422-6237).

Barrier 4: I just don't have time.

You don't have half an hour, once a year? From start to finish, a basic screening mammogram lasts about 15 to 20 minutes. A more in-depth diagnostic mammogram, which takes images from more angles, runs 30 to 45 minutes. If that still sounds like too much time, think about this: Several large studies conducted around the world show that mammograms help reduce the number of deaths from breast cancer for women ages 40 to 69, especially those over age 50. And then think about this: How much time will it take to fight breast cancer once it has spread through your body? A lot more than half an hour.



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PUT YOUR HEALTH WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS

Patients with poor oral health should be reminded that the consequences may be more serious than bad breath and sore gums. Heart attack, uncontrolled Type 2 diabetes, preterm birth, stroke, respiratory disease, and other serious medical conditions are associated with periodontal disease.

While the precise nature of the association remains in question, research suggests that pathogens from bacterial infections that form under the gum line may enter the bloodstream and cause inflammation elsewhere in the body. Other research suggests that the infection causes an overreaction of the immune system, which damages tissue by flooding the bloodstream with elevated levels of fibrinogen and C-reactive protein.

Symptoms may not appear in early-stage periodontal disease. As it progresses, signs include swollen, tender, red or purple, receding, or pus-filled gums and loose teeth. Progressive bone, tooth and tissue loss are signs of more serious types of periodontitis.

Family members of patients with periodontal disease are at risk of contracting it through exchange of saliva. In addition, periodontal disease may be inherited; up to 30 percent of the population is genetically predisposed.

The American Academy of Periodontology recommends that a dental professional screen individuals with symptoms of periodontal disease, pregnant women, and any patients diagnosed with heart disease, diabetes, respiratory disease or osteoporosis.



Be sure to check out this month's healthy family activities in your community at:

<http://search.active.com/?tab=events>

Here are a few of the October activities in our area:

2009 Pink Pumpkin Walk – Oct. 3

Olde School Square - Ledgeview
2200 Dickinson Rd

Sports 4 Kids Clinic – Oct. 17

U W Fox Valley Field House, 1478 Midway Road, Menasha

YMCA Freaky 5K – Oct. 24

Pierce Park, 1001 W. Prospect Ave, Appleton

Red-Hot Chicken Fusili

8 ounces uncooked fusili pasta (4 cups cooked)
½ pound chicken breasts, diced into ½-inch pieces
1 Tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup parsley, freshly minced
4 cups ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 Tablespoon fresh basil, chopped, or 1 teaspoon dried basil
1 Tablespoon oregano leaves, crushed, or 1 teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon salt
Ground red pepper or cayenne pepper, to taste

- Cook pasta in unsalted water until al dente (firm).
- Heat oil in a medium saucepan. Sauté garlic and parsley until golden. Add tomatoes and spices. Cook uncovered over low heat 15 minutes or until thickened, stirring frequently.
- Add chicken and continue cooking for 15 minutes or until chicken is cooked through and sauce is thick.
- To serve, spoon sauce over pasta and sprinkle with coarsely chopped parsley. Serve hot as a main dish and cold for the next day's lunch.

Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 398 calories, 7 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 44 mg cholesterol, 325 mg sodium.

