CALLING OUT BREAST CANCER MYTHS

### Myth vs Fact

#### Myth

**All breast cancer is inherited.**

**Fact** Most breast cancers occur at random. Only about 5 to 10% of breast cancers are caused by inheriting a faulty gene. Most women who get breast cancer — about 75% of them — do not have a family history of the disease.

#### Myth

**Certain vitamins and dietary supplements prevent breast cancer.**

**Fact** While eating a healthy and nutritious diet may have a protective effect against cancer in general, no specific ingredients, vitamins, enzymes, minerals, herbs or other supplements are proven to prevent breast cancer.

#### Myth

**Wearing underwire bras and using antiperspirants cause breast cancer.**

**Fact** No conclusive evidence links the development of breast cancer to either of these.

#### Myth

**Mammograms cause/prevent breast cancer.**

**Fact** A mammogram is an x-ray of the breasts that gives physicians a picture of the inside of the breast tissue. They do not prevent, nor cause, breast cancer. Mammography is one of the best tools we have today to detect cancer at its earliest and most treatable stages.

#### Myth

**Breastfeed, if possible.** Breastfeeding (the longer the better) may lower breast cancer risk.

#### Myth

**Avoid hormone replacement therapy (HRT).** Hormone therapy that contains estrogen or progesterone, sometimes given to women who’ve had ovaries removed or to ease menopause side effects, increases breast cancer risk. (This is different from oral contraceptives.)

### Get regular checkups.

A clinical breast exam (done in the doctor’s office) should become part of your annual checkup starting at age 25.

### Risk factors.

Most breast lumps are not cancer, but they still need to be checked out.

### Couch potato alert:

Women who are inactive throughout life have a greater risk for breast cancer.

### Healthy weight throughout life.

Obesity increases risk for many cancers, including breast cancer.

### Don’t start drinking alcohol.

Drinking beer, wine, coolers, hard seltzers or teas, and other alcoholic drinks can raise risk.

### Avoid smoking.

Call the New York State Quitline for free help and cessation aids at 1-866-NY-QUITS, nysmokefree.com

### What you can do later

- Breastfeed, if possible.
- Have a mammogram at age 40 (and every year thereafter).
- Avoid hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

### What you can do now

- Get moving!
- Know your risk factors.
- Get regular checkups.

### For Teens

ROSWELL PARK COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
What can we learn from Angelina Jolie?

When actress Angelina Jolie announced that she underwent a double mastectomy (surgery that removes both breasts) to prevent getting breast cancer, it raised many questions for a lot of women. The actress learned through genetic testing that she carried a faulty BRCA gene, which greatly increased her risk of developing breast cancer. Experts estimate that less than 1% of women carry such a gene.

Other factors may increase risk for the disease, too, and learning about the ones that affect your personal cancer risk is important. Roswell Park’s Breast Cancer Risk Assessment and Prevention program provides comprehensive risk assessment, surveillance exams and imaging, risk reduction and prevention options, genetic screening and access to prevention studies.

MEET OUR DOCTORS

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LEARN MORE

Yroswell.com
A website designed specifically for young people who want to get involved and help create a world without cancer.

Yroswell KidsHealth
Honest, accurate info and advice about health, emotions and life.

cancer.gov/cancertopics/aya
Information and resources for adolescents and young adults with cancer.