

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

As of January 2021, there are more than 3.8 million women with a history of breast cancer in the U.S.

1 Introduction

Breast cancer refers to a malignant tumor that develops from cells in the breast. Cancer occurs as a result of mutations in genes responsible for regulating the growth of cells. While some cancers develop due to an inherited genetic abnormality, 85-90% of breast cancers are due to abnormalities resulting from the normal aging process.

2 Stages

The stages of breast cancer are typically expressed as a number on a scale of 0 through 4. These stages are determined by the cancer's characteristics, including how large it is and whether or not it has hormone receptors. Stage 0 refers to non-invasive cancers that remain within their original location, while stage 4 refers to invasive cancers that have spread to other parts of the body outside the breast.

3 Symptoms

Breast cancer symptoms can vary widely, so it is important to have anything unusual checked by a doctor. Monthly breast self-exams should be part of a regular health care routine in addition to annual mammograms in women over 40 or at high risk of breast cancer. Some symptoms of breast cancer to look for are:

- A breast lump or thickening that feels different from surrounding tissue
- Change in the size, shape or appearance of a breast
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- A lump in the underarm area

4 Treatment

Each individual's treatment can differ depending on the type of breast cancer, the stage, size and a variety of other circumstances. The first step after diagnosis is usually surgery in attempt remove the cancerous cells. Other treatment options can include:

- Chemotherapy
- Radiation therapy
- Hormonal therapy
- Targeted therapy drugs

Did you know?

1 in 8 U.S. women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in their lifetime.

For more information on breast cancer and supportive resources, please visit <https://www.abcf.org>

References:

<https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/breast-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20352470>

https://www.physio-pedia.com/Breast_Cancer