OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
Breast Cancer Awareness—Healthy Ideas

1. Take Charge of Your Breast Health

· Have an annual mammogram,
· Perform a breast self-exam every month,
· Understand your personal risks of the disease, and
· Report any breast changes promptly to your health care provider.

2. Have an Annual Mammogram Starting at Age 40

Continue the practice well beyond age 60. The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age.

3. Know the Risk Factors

Common risk factors include:

· Age. The risk of breast cancer increases as a woman ages. About 82 percent of breast cancers occur in women age 50 and older. The risk is especially high for women over 60.

· Personal History. Women who have had breast cancer may develop it again. Women with a history of breast disease, but not cancer, may be predisposed to develop breast cancer.

· Family History. The risk of getting breast cancer increases for a woman whose mother, sister, daughter, or two or more close relatives have had the disease.

Other risk factors include:

· Breast cancer genes. Some individuals, both women and men, may be born with an alteration in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene that put them at an “inherited” higher risk for breast cancer.

· Having a first period before age 12.

· Having a first pregnancy after age 25 or 35.

· Having no children.

· Using hormone replacement

· Lifestyle choices, such as a poor diet, insufficient physical activity, alcohol use, and smoking.
4. Take Action to Reduce Your Risk

Daily lifestyle choices you make may reduce your risk for breast cancer. Taking steps for a healthier life will also reduce your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic, life-threatening conditions.

To reduce your risk:
· Decrease your daily fat intake—especially saturated and hydrogenated fats.
· Increase fiber in your diet. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables are sources for fiber.
· Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.
· Limit your alcohol intake. Evidence suggests a small increase in risk exists for women who average two or more alcoholic drinks per day.
· Stay physically active. Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) most days of the week.
· Don’t smoke.

For More Information

American Cancer Society
(800) ACS-2345
www.cancer.org

Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
(800) 462-9273
www.komen.org

National Cancer Institute
Cancer Information Service
(800) 4-CANCER (800-422-6237)
www.cancer.gov

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
www.nbcam.com

Sources: National Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2005 Promotion Guide,