



**EHHD**  
Eastern Highlands Health District

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**EHHD Recognizes National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

This October, the Eastern Highlands Health District is recognizing National Breast Cancer Awareness month by reminding residents of the importance of keeping a clean bill of health. Although breast cancer is the second most common type of cancer among women, there are many things you can do to lower your risk for developing the disease.

About 1 in 8 women born today in the United States will get breast cancer at some point. The good news is that when detected early, survival rate is almost 100%. Most breast cancers are found in women who are 50 years or older, but breast cancer also affects younger women and sometimes men. About 11% of all new cases of breast cancer in the United States are found in women younger than 45 years of age and 1% of cases are found in men. If you have certain risk factors, you may be more likely to get breast cancer. Risk factors for breast cancer include, but aren't limited to, being younger when you had your first menstrual period, your age, having personal or family history of breast cancer or other breast problems, and being overweight, especially after menopause.

A breast cancer screening is when a women's breasts are checked for cancer before she has any symptoms. A mammogram is an x-ray picture of the breast. Mammograms are the best way to find cancer early, before it's big enough to feel or to cause symptoms. All women should talk with their physician about an individualized screening plan which takes into account their family history and personal risk factors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that women between the ages of 50-74 should have a mammogram every 2 years. Women under the age of 50 should speak to their doctor about starting screenings in their 20's and 30's such as a breast self-exams (BSE) or clinical breast-exams (CBE) from their physician.

Robert Miller, Director of the Eastern Highlands Health District, reminds us that the best protection for breast cancer is early detection. "When it comes to reducing one's risk for a chronic disease such as breast cancer, health screenings and tests can be a lifesaver. Also, it's



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important for residents to be diligent about taking other actions that can help keep breast cancer at bay, such as healthy eating, tobacco cessation and exercise.”

If you have a low income or do not have insurance and you are between the ages of 40 and 64, you may qualify for a free or low-cost mammogram through CDC’s National Breast Cancer and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. To learn more, call (800) CDC-INFO.

Besides having regular breast cancer screenings, the CDC recommends some modifications you can make to your lifestyle to reduce your risk for breast cancer, such as:

- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Getting at least 4 hours of exercise per week
- Get a good night’s sleep- aim for at least 7 hours per night
- Avoid alcohol, or limit your consumption of alcohol to one drink per day
- Avoid exposure to chemicals that can cause cancer
- Try to reduce your exposure to radiation during medical tests like mammograms, X-rays, CT scans, and PET scans
- If you are taking, or have been told to take, hormone replacement therapy or oral contraceptives (birth control pills), ask your doctor about the risks and find out if it’s right for you
- Breastfeed your babies, if possible

EHHD is participating in Breast Cancer Awareness Month by providing residents in the district with items to help them remember to get their screenings and stay healthy such as women’s health planners, notepads and pens, pedometers, informational handouts on health screening recommendations and more (items will be available for residents at their Town Halls. Supplies are limited.) The items will be available within the first couple weeks of the month.

Communities and organizations throughout the state are observing Breast Cancer Awareness Month through activities such as fun runs, community walks, “Fit For the Cure” events at Lord and Taylor, horseback rides, and much more. Find a listing of all of the events at <http://www.komenct.org/find-event>.

For additional resources related to Breast Cancer Awareness Month, such as more details on recommended health tests and screenings and expanded information on lifestyle modifications to reduce your risk for breast cancer, please visit [www.ehhd.org/promotethecure](http://www.ehhd.org/promotethecure).