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October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month *Early detection saves lives, and that life could be your own*

SANTA FE – New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month by reminding New Mexicans to schedule their annual cancer screenings. Spread the word about mammograms – with early detection and treatment, most women can survive breast cancer.

“The best protection is early detection,” said **Jodi McGinnis Porter, DOH communications director and breast cancer survivor**. “I’m here today because my cancer was caught early and treated. Please don’t delay care, get checked and schedule your annual mammogram.”

Breast cancer is one of the most common kinds of cancer in women. In 2022, an estimated 290,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women in the U.S. About one in eight women in the U.S. will get breast cancer at some point.

Although it is rare, men get breast cancer too. In 2022, an estimated 2,720 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in the U.S. and approximately 530 men will die from breast cancer.

DOH reports that breast cancer remains the most common cancer among women in the state and the second leading cause of cancer death among New Mexico women. This year, we estimate 1,512 women will be diagnosed with cancer in New Mexico and sadly, an estimated 279 women will die of breast cancer in our state.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), there are several different symptoms for breast cancer and some people don’t have symptoms at all. However, there are common risk factors that include:

- Being a woman
- Being older (most breast cancers are found in women 50 years-old and older)
- Having a strong family history of breast cancer
- Having changes in your BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes

Some of the following guidelines may lower your risk for developing breast cancer:

- Keep a healthy weight and exercise regularly.
- Don't drink alcohol, or limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- If you are taking hormone replacement therapy or birth control pills, ask your doctor about the risks.
- Breastfeed your children, if possible.

All screening tests have benefits and risks, so it is important to talk to your doctor before getting any screening test, including a mammogram. If the cost of a mammogram is an issue, call the New Mexico DOH Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (BCC) toll-free hotline at 1-833-525-1811 to find a participating medical provider in your area. Our hotline provides services in English, Spanish and other languages. You may be eligible for a free mammogram (or cervical cancer screening) if you:

- Have a low income
- Have little or no insurance
- Are a woman (including a transgender woman or man)

The medical provider's office will let you know if you are eligible for the BCC Program. For more information, please visit our website at: <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/pchb/bcc>

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The Department of Health works to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and deliver services to all New Mexicans. As New Mexico's largest state agency, DOH offers public health services in all 33 counties and collaborates with 23 Native American tribes, Pueblos and nations.