



Health@News

Your Guide to a Healthier Lifestyle

VOLUME 5 ♦ ISSUE #4

MAMMOGRAMS: MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF EARLY DETECTION

This year in the United States, approximately 178,480 women are expected to be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and an estimated 40,460 women will die from the disease. According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, other than skin cancer, and the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer. Fortunately, breast cancer rates are declining, most likely because of early detection and better treatment for the disease.

WHAT IS A MAMMOGRAM?

An important way to detect breast cancer early is with a mammogram, an x-ray designed to detect and diagnose breast disease. There are two types of mammograms: screening and diagnostic. Screening mammograms are designed to search for breast disease in women who do not have symptoms, while diagnostic mammograms are intended to diagnose disease in women who are experiencing symptoms.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A MAMMOGRAM?

During a mammogram, a technologist positions the breast between two plates. The plates compress the breast, which spreads the breast tissue and allows a readable image to be created. The compression lasts for several seconds and can cause discomfort; however, it is necessary. A radiologist, a physician who specialized in reading x-rays and other tests, reads the x-ray and looks for changes. Mammograms generally take approximately 20 minutes, and facilities are required to communicate the results within 30 days.

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A Healthy Home



Many people consider their homes to be sanctuaries where they are safe and protected from the hazards often present in today's society. While this is often a true and comforting notion, it is important to take steps to ensure that one's home is indeed a healthy and safe environment. Many accidents that occur in the home are highly preventable, as are some infectious germ-related illnesses that can spread in the home.

Avoid Accidents

In many cases, accidents such as falls, burns, fires, and poisonings could be prevented by following some important safety guidelines. Consider the following recommendations to keep your home safe and hazard-free. In addition, keep important

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EARLY DETECTION IS KEY

The American Cancer Society's guidelines for the early detection of breast cancer recommend that women age 40 and older have a mammogram every year and continue to do so as long as they are in good health. Because mammograms do not detect every cancer, the guidelines also state that women age 40 and older are advised to have a clinical breast exam as part of a periodic health exam every year. Women ages 20-39 are advised to have a clinical breast exam as part of a periodic health exam, every three years. In addition, all women should talk to their doctors about the benefits and limitations of monthly breast self-examination (BSE). Finally, the guidelines advise women at high risk (greater than 20% lifetime risk) to get an MRI and a mammogram every year. Women at moderately increased risk (15% to 20% lifetime risk) should talk with their doctors about the benefits and limitations of adding MRI screening to their annual mammogram.

To learn about risk factors and prevention strategies for breast cancer, consult a physician.

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telephone numbers such as poison control, pediatrician, and hospital Emergency Room posted near the phone at all times; this could save valuable minutes during an emergency.

- Equip your home with smoke detectors on every floor. Replace the batteries at least twice a year, and test your smoke detectors on a monthly basis.
- An all-purpose fire extinguisher is one rated for both grease and electrical fires. Keep one in your kitchen, and

keep fire extinguishers near the furnace and garage, as well as anywhere else you think a fire could potentially start.

- In case of fire, plan an escape route from each area of the house. Draw maps of the escape routes and practice them on a regular basis with your family.
- To avoid falls, keep floors and stairways clear of toys, coats, shoes, and clutter.
- Close and lock windows when small children are present. Never let children play unsupervised on a balcony or high porch.
- Secure loose electrical cords so that people will not trip over them.
- Many household items can be harmful or fatal if swallowed. Keep perfume, nail polish remover, paint, bleach, kitchen and bathroom cleaners and any other toxic substance capped tightly and out of the reach of children at all times.
- Hang coats and purses of visitors out of the reach of children. Loose medication may be in the pocket of a coat or purse.

Prevent Germ-Related Illness

Adopting important healthy habits goes a long way toward keeping your home germ-free. Consider the following suggestions to minimize the spread of germs, and consequently germ-related illness, in and around the home.

- Wash your hands frequently to remove dirt and germs from other people, contaminated surfaces, and animals. Use soap and warm water, rub hands together for at least 15 seconds, and dry with a disposable towel.
- Cleaning surfaces with soap and water usually removes dirt and germs, while disinfecting with a bleach solution or other disinfectant kills bacteria and other germs.
- It is important to clean and disinfect your kitchen frequently since germs tend to linger in kitchens.
- Be careful when preparing and cooking food. Always remember to wash raw fruits and vegetables and use separate utensils for raw and cooked foods.
- Take your pets to a veterinarian regularly for vaccinations and treatment for worms to decrease the chance that your pet will pass an infection to a family member.

If you experience a germ-related or food borne illness, seek immediate medical attention.

Spirit of Women

Programs

Spirit Girls Night Out – Your Best Health Now

Thursday, October 16 • 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Bring your friends, sisters and adult daughters for a night of fun, beauty and relaxation. Relax and refresh with hors d'oeuvres and a glass of wine. Get a chair massage or receive tips on reviewing your personal health, reinventing your family's meals and more.

Fee: \$10 Spirit of Women Members; \$15 for non-members (includes a free Spirit of Women membership)

Get What You Need Out of Life: Sharing Secrets and Solving Problems

Tuesday, November 11 • 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Want to know the secrets to younger looking skin, surviving menopause or getting control of your pelvic health? Find out during an evening filled with fun and surprises.

Fee: \$10 (includes light meal)

Flu Shots for the Community

Flu shots are offered for adults and children ages three and older at the Hospital, WingHaven Medical Building and various locations in the community. Call the Flu Shot Hotline at 314-205-6006 for locations and times or visit www.stlukes-stl.com. No appointment is necessary.

Fee: \$30 (Medicare accepted)

Call 314-542-4848 or visit www.stlukes-stl.com to register or for a complete listing of classes.

 **St. Luke's HOSPITAL**

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232 S. Woods Mill Road
Chesterfield, MO 63017
www.stlukes-stl.com