

Your Health Matters

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

We have all had either a mother, daughter, sister, wife, or friend whose lives have been touched by breast cancer. Here are just a few of these women's stories:

- 30-year-old Shawna noticed bloody discharge and a lump in her breast.
- Heather's breast itched, but she thought it was just dry skin. Then she felt a lump.
- Felicia had a mammogram at age 35 after her two sisters had breast cancer. The test confirmed she had breast cancer as well.

All these women were proactive in their breast cancer care – doing self-exams, learning about their risk, and talking to their doctor when they were concerned. All survived breast cancer.

Unfortunately, not everyone who is diagnosed with breast cancer will survive, but breast cancer that is found early is easier to treat.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women in America. It is most often found in women over 50 years old, but most women who get breast cancer have no known risk factors and no history of the disease in their families.

Some people with breast cancer don't develop any symptoms. Others may have pain in the breast, lumps, a change in the size or shape of the breast, or discharge from the nipple. Women should do regular self-exams of the breasts to look for any of these symptoms.

Women 50 to 74 years old should also have a mammogram every two years. And women over 40 should talk to their health care provider about how often to have a mammogram.

Great progress has been made in treatments effective against cancer. These treatments are saving lives. It is important that breast cancer be diagnosed early when it is easier to treat. Talk to your health care provider about your risk for breast cancer and screening options that are best for you.

The Ellis Fischel Mammogram Van will be at the Health Department on Tuesday, November 22nd. Please call 573-564-2495 to make your mammogram appointment.

The Montgomery County Health Department loves taking care of your family, and works every day to protect, promote and improve health in our community. To learn more, call 573-564-2495 or visit us online at www.montgomerycountyhealth.org or on Facebook or Twitter @healthymoco. ■

