

“Understanding Native American Cancer Data in Arizona”

2nd Series Topic: Female Breast Cancer

You may have been seeing a considerable amount of information about breast cancer, here is why:

Top 5 Arizona Cancer Mortality Sites for Native American Females, 2016-2020		
Rank	Cancer Site	Avg Annual # of Deaths
1	Female Breast	15
2	Liver and Intrahepatic Bile Duct	13
3	Colorectal	12
4	Pancreas	12
5	Ovarian	11

*Data sourced from the Arizona Cancer Registry's mortality data trends in Arizona's Native American population from 2016-2020.

Female breast cancer is the first leading cause of cancer-related death in Arizona Native American females and is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in Native American females nationwide. Between 2016-2020, Arizona Native American females had the highest percentage (31.7%) of new cases of female breast cancer that were diagnosed in the late stage. Breast cancer usually has no symptoms when the tumor is small and most treatable, making it difficult to detect early. Breast cancer can be caught earlier if screening efforts were to increase. **A mammogram may save your life.**

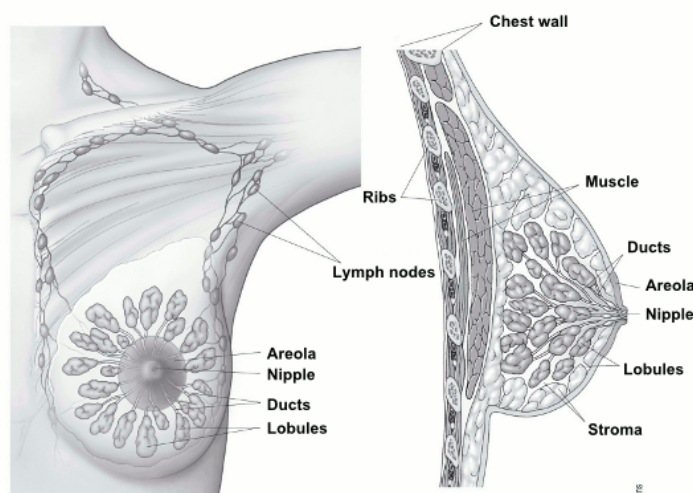
What exactly is breast cancer?

What is breast cancer?

- A type of cancer that starts in the breast and it can start in one or both breasts.
- Breast cancer occurs almost entirely in women, but **men can get breast cancer, too.**

Where does breast cancer start?

- Breast cancers can start from different parts of the breast.
- The breast is an organ that sits on top of the upper ribs and chest muscles.
- There is a left and right breast and each one has mainly glands, ducts, and fatty tissue (see the illustration to the right).
- Breast cancer can spread when the cancer cells get into the blood or lymph system and then are carried to other parts of the body.



Normal breast tissue

For a detailed breakdown of how breast cancer develops, click on the video link below:

[Watch video](#)

What can you do to reduce your risk?

- Limit alcohol consumption
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Maintain physical activity
- Breastfeed (if possible)
- Consult your physician if taking hormonal therapy

If you have a genetic proneness, personal history, and/or family history of breast cancer, consult with your doctor about when you should begin screening.

Screening Recommendations?

- **Women between 40 and 44** have the option to start screening with a mammogram every year.
- **Women 45 to 54** should get mammograms every year.
- **Women 55 and older** can switch to a mammogram every other year, or they can choose to continue yearly mammograms.
- **Women who are at high risk** for breast cancer based on certain factors should get a breast MRI and a mammogram every year, typically **starting at age 30**.

All that in mind...

Regular screenings are important because most individuals with early-stage breast cancer do not experience any signs or symptoms and screening can help rule out cancer or other issues or simply prevent the cancer from spreading.

It is natural to feel scared or anxious about cancer screenings, but it is also beneficial to learn more about it and to be proactive about your health.

Breast self-examinations are *not* a replacement for mammograms or clinical exams by your doctor, but they can be a useful and important screening tool you can do on your own.

Please see the link below with a step-by-step guide on how to perform a breast self-exam, provided by the Cleveland Clinic:

[How to conduct a self-breast exam](#)

Tribal Health Program Highlight: The Hopi Women's Health Program (HWHP)

The Hopi Women's Health Program Partners with National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program to Promote Health Equity in Cancer Screening

The Hopi Women's Health Program (HWHP), a tribally-based program dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Hopi women, is proud to announce the continued collaboration with the CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP). This partnership aims to improve the health equity gap by increasing access to crucial breast and cervical cancer screenings and care services for underserved populations.

For over 25 years, the Hopi Women's Health Program and the NBCCEDP have been dedicated to supporting low-income, uninsured, and underinsured individuals within tribal communities.



*Pink ribbon artist:
Renferd Koruh*

Strategies that will be implemented consist of:

- Outreach and Education Programs
- Mobile Screening Units
- Financial Assistance
- Training and Capacity Building

It is crucial that **women over the age of 40** have a mammogram once a year until they are 74, and **women over the age of 21** maintain pap test screenings according to the provider's recommendation until age 65.

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