

# THINK PINK

## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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A Special Supplement to

**Lake Okeechobee  
News**

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### **Different types of breast cancers**

Women diagnosed with breast cancer may each face a different battle

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# Are there different types of breast cancer?

Women diagnosed with breast cancer may each face a different battle, as there are many different types of the disease.

**M**illions of women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year.

According to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, more than 2.3 million women across the globe were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2020. The BCRF also notes that breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women in 140 of 184 countries worldwide.

Breast cancer statistics can give the impression that each of the millions of women diagnosed with the disease is fighting the same battle, but breast cancer is something of an umbrella term. In fact, there are various types of breast cancer, including ductal carcinoma in situ, invasive ductal carcinoma, inflammatory breast cancer, and metastatic breast cancer. Learning about each type of breast cancer can help women and their families gain a greater understanding of this disease.

### Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)

DCIS is a non-invasive cancer that is diagnosed when abnormal cells have



been found in the lining of the breast milk duct. The National Breast Cancer Foundation notes that DCIS is a highly treatable cancer. That's because it hasn't spread beyond the milk duct into any surrounding breast tissue. The American Cancer Society notes that roughly 20 percent of new breast cancer cases are instances of DCIS.

### Invasive ductal carcinoma (IDC)

IDC is the most common type of breast cancer. The NBCF reports that between 70 and 80 percent of all breast cancer diagnoses are instances of IDC. An IDC diagnosis means that cancer began growing in the milk ducts but has since spread into other parts of the breast tissue. This is why IDC is characterized as "invasive." Though IDC can affect

people, including men, of any age, the ACS notes that the majority of IDC cases are in women age 55 and older.

### Inflammatory breast cancer (IBC)

The NBCF describes IBC as an "aggressive and fast growing breast cancer." Breastcancer.org notes that IBC is rare, as data from the ACS indicates that only about 1 percent of all breast cancers in the United States are inflammatory breast cancers. Many breast cancers begin with the formation of a lump, but Breastcancer.org reports that IBC usually begins with reddening and swelling of the breast, and symptoms can worsen considerably within days or even hours. That underscores the importance of seeking prompt treatment should any symptoms present themselves.

### Metastatic breast cancer

Metastatic breast cancer may be referred to as stage IV breast cancer. When a woman is diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, that means the cancer has spread, or metastasized, into other parts of the body. The NBCF indicates that metastatic breast cancer usually spreads to the lungs, liver, bones, or brain. Symptoms of metastatic breast cancer vary depending on where the cancer has spread. For example, if the cancer has spread to the lungs, women may experience a chronic cough or be unable to get a full breath.

These are not the only types of breast cancer. A more extensive breakdown of the various types of breast cancer can be found at [breastcancer.org/symptoms/types](http://breastcancer.org/symptoms/types).

## Did you know?

**A** 2017 study published in the journal Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention found that about one-third of women diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in the United States live at least five years after diagnosis. Also known as stage IV breast cancer, metastatic breast cancer is the most advanced stage of the disease. Metastatic breast cancer refers to breast cancer that has spread beyond the breast and nearby lymph nodes to other parts of the body. Patients diagnosed with breast cancer also should know that improved treatments may further their chances of surviving a diagnosis, even a diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer. In fact, the American Cancer Society notes that survival rates are based on women who were diagnosed and treated at least five years earlier. In the time since those survival rates were documented, treatments could have advanced even further, potentially improving the five-year survival rates for metastatic breast cancer.

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# Various factors that could affect breast cancer treatment



will consider women's age, general health and family history when mapping a course of treatment. In addition, doctors discuss menopause with women when determining a course of treatment. Breastcancer.org notes that

some breast cancer treatments can bring on menopause more abruptly than it would happen otherwise, so doctors will consider women's history with menopause when determining treatment.

**T**reatment for breast cancer is often successful. For example, data from the American Society of Clinical Oncology indicates that the five-year survival rate for women diagnosed with non-metastatic invasive breast cancer is 90 percent, while the average 10-year survival rate for such cancers is 84 percent. Those figures reflect advancements in treatment and the effectiveness of campaigns designed to encourage women to receive routine breast cancer screenings as part of their preventive health care regimens.

Once doctors have diagnosed breast cancer, they will consider a host of factors as they try to determine a course of treatment.

- **Stage:** The National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. notes that treatment options depend on

the stage of the disease at the time of diagnosis. Stage is usually expressed in a numerical value between 0 and IV, with 0 being the least severe form of the disease and IV being the most advanced (i.e., metastatic).

- **Tumor size and location:** The Cleveland Clinic notes that the size and location of the tumor also affects how doctors will approach treatment. In general, the smaller the tumor, the more easy it is to treat the disease. Where in the breast the tumor is located also will affect the treatment plan. Doctors often employ a combination of treatments such as chemotherapy, radiation and surgery to treat breast cancer, and such an approach may be more likely to be employed if the tumor is large.

- **Pathology tests:** Pathology is the science of causes and effects of diseases. When treating patients for breast cancer, doctors order pathology tests so they can better understand how the disease is affecting their patients' bodies. For example, the Cleveland Clinic notes that pathology tests like hormone receptor tests and human epidermal growth factor receptor (HER2/

neu) can indicate if hormones or growth factors are helping the cancer grow. The results of these and other pathology tests can then help doctors determine an effective course of treatment.

- **Personal characteristics:** Doctors

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# Hendry Regional Medical Center hosts 5th Annual Pink Warriors Walk



CLEWISTON – Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC) is hosting the 5th annual **Pink Warriors Walk**. The 5k walk is on Saturday, October 23 at Sugar Festival Field in Clewiston, and concludes with a delicious breakfast.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness and about 1 in 8 U.S. women will develop breast cancer over the course of her lifetime. As of January 2021, there were more than 3.8 million women with a history of breast cancer in the U.S. This includes women currently being treated and women who have finished treatment. Per 2018 data, 136 women per 100,000 females will be affected with breast cancer in Hendry County.

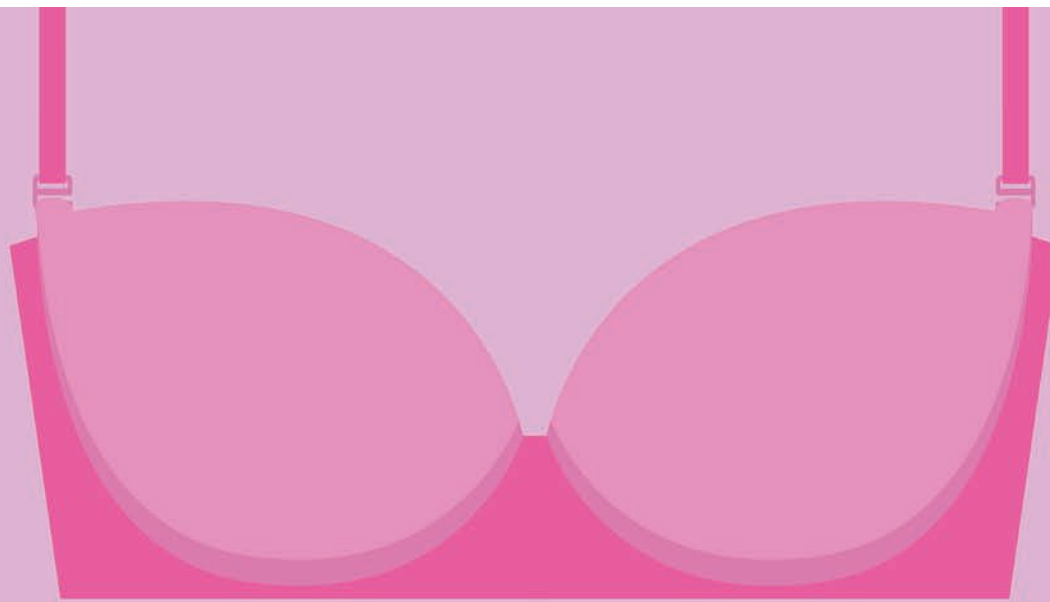
HRMC created the Pink Warriors to raise awareness of breast cancer as well as raise funds for the Pink Warriors Fund that would be utilized and stay with in our community. “We have had a tremendous response and outpouring from the community for our annual event, and we are able to raise critical dollars to help local women in their fight against breast cancer. We are looking forward to another successful fundraiser and hope to exceed last year’s fundraising,” stated R.D. Williams, CEO.

The Pink Warriors Walk traditionally raises over \$20,000 for the Pink Warriors Fund annually. In addition to the funds raised by the 5K walk other organizations from LaBelle, Moore Haven and Clewiston generously donate their fundraising efforts to be included, which allows HRMC to reach more women. Since its inception in 2017, through generous donors the Pink Warriors Walk has raised over **\$88,000!**

The Pink Warriors Fund can be used for any woman in need of a breast related screening or diagnostic imaging service provided by HRMC that is not covered by insurance. To utilize the fund the doctor writes “Pink Warrior Fund” on the prescription/order and the patient can make an appointment at a HRMC location in Clewiston or LaBelle.

To join the Pink Warriors Walk 2021 and raise funds for local women’s breast health or to learn more, text “PWW21” to 243-725.

**About Hendry Regional Medical Center:** Hendry Regional Medical Center is a 25-bed critical access hospital that incorporates modern technology with state-of-the-art medical staff to care for its patients. Hendry Regional Medical Center’s mission is “to excel in quality, compassion, and innovation to make our community healthier.”



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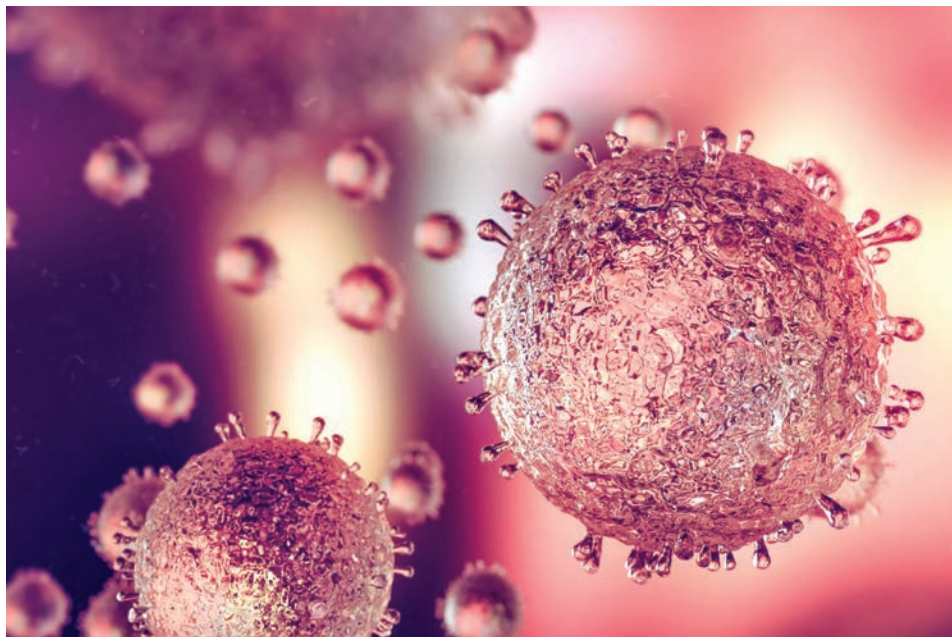
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# The role of staging when diagnosing breast cancer

**A** cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming, and people who receive such news may be flooded with a wide range of emotions. When delivering such a diagnosis, doctors share vital information about their patients' disease. Those details can go a long way toward easing patients' concerns.

Staging is an important component of cancer treatment. The National Cancer Institute notes that stage refers to the extent of the cancer, including how large the tumor is and whether or not it has spread, or metastasized. Learning the stage of the cancer, which is typically expressed on a scale of 0 through IV, helps doctors understand how serious the cancer is and the patient's chances of survival. Staging also is used to plan treatments and

potentially identify clinical trials that may serve as treatment options.

The American Joint Committee on Cancer oversees the breast cancer staging system and utilizes the TNM system. Breastcancer.org notes that three clinical characteristics, referred to as "T, N, and M," are used to calculate the stage of the cancer:

- the size of the tumor and whether or not it has grown into nearby tissue (T)
- whether the cancer is in the lymph nodes (N)
- whether the cancer has spread, or metastasized, into other parts of the body beyond the breast (M)

Additional characteristics were added to the AJCC's TNM breast cancer staging system in 2018. Though this has made determining the stage

of breast cancer more complex, Breastcancer.org notes that it's also made staging more accurate. That improved accuracy increases the likelihood that doctors will choose the most effective treatment plan for their patients, which should ease those patients' concerns as they begin treatment.

Staging is complex, and patients should know that staging alone does not dictate prognosis. The following breakdown, courtesy of the NCI, is a brief description of the five stages of cancer (stages 0 through IV). A more detailed description of breast cancer stages can be found at <https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/diagnosis/staging>.

- Stage 0: This is diagnosed when abnormal cells are present but

have not spread to nearby tissue. Stage 0 is also called carcinoma in situ, or CIS. CIS is not cancer, but it may become cancer.

- Stages I through III: Cancer is present in these stages. The higher the number, the larger the tumor is and the more it has spread into nearby tissues.
- Stage IV: The cancer has spread into distant parts of the body.

Staging plays an important role in treating cancer. Recognizing the role of staging can help patients better understand their disease and the direction of their treatments. More information about staging is available at [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

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# How physical activity can help in the fight against breast cancer



**B**reast cancer is a complex disease that affects millions of women across the globe each year. Though the American Cancer Society reports that only about 4 percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States are under age 40, women of all ages can take steps to protect themselves against this deadly disease.

Exercise benefits women in myriad ways, and that includes lowering their risk for breast cancer. The ACS notes that researchers are increasingly linking exercise to a reduced risk for breast cancer. Though the reasons behind that link remain unclear, some theorize that the positive effects of exercise on body weight, inflammation, hormones, and energy balance could be why regular physical activity helps women reduce their risk for breast cancer.

## Body weight and breast cancer

The National Cancer Institute reports that being obese after menopause can significantly increase a woman's risk for breast cancer. In addition, the ACS attributes the rise in hormone receptor-positive breast cancers to an increased prevalence of excessive body weight. Routine

exercise is a highly effective way to lose weight and keep weight off, which in turn could lower women's risk for breast cancer.

## Being sedentary and breast cancer

Exercise is not a sedentary activity, and that could be another reason why women who are physically active have a lower risk for breast cancer. The ACS notes that more than one study has linked sitting time to a higher risk of various diseases, including breast cancer. Researchers with the ACS analyzed data from 77,462 women, who they followed for an average of 15.8 years. None of the participants had cancer when the study started, but researchers found that women who sat for six or more hours per day during their free time had a 10 percent greater risk for invasive breast cancer than women who sat for less than three hours per day during free time.

## Does physical activity really reduce breast cancer risk?

The human body is complex, and a host of factors, including those like age that women have no control over, can affect cancer risk. However, engaging in routine physical activity seems to be an effective way for women to reduce their risk for breast cancer. In fact, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation estimates that one-third of all breast cancer cases could be prevented with positive lifestyle choices that help women maintain a healthy weight, including exercise.

Routine physical activity can be a significant weapon in women's arsenal as they continue their efforts to prevent and overcome breast cancer.



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Cancer**



**October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month!**

Remember to do monthly breast self-exams and schedule a mammogram!

**Lake Okeechobee News**

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