

Delaying Care Could Increase Breast Cancer Risk

Early detection of breast cancer is key to effective treatment.

KNOX, TX (Sept 29, 2021) – Although treatment has improved, early detection remains key to beating breast cancer. The number of women who die from breast cancer has been steadily decreasing, but much of that decline is due to early detection thanks to frequent screening.

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Knox County Hospital District is encouraging women not to delay their healthcare care and discuss breast cancer risks and screenings with their local healthcare provider.

“Knowing your risk and getting tested regularly are key to early detection of the disease,” said Dr. Laura Hart, MD, a family practice physician who serves in the Knox County Clinic . “Your Knox City or Munday medical provider can consult with you about your risk, discuss self-examinations and recommend screenings that could save your life.”

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in women and the second-leading cause of cancer death among women in the United States. When breast cancer is detected in its first stage, survival rates for women are nearly 99 percent at five years. However, by Stage 3, survival rates at five years fall to about 57 percent.

Breast cancer is a malignant tumor that develops from breast tissue and, like many other cancers, can quickly spread to other parts of the body if not detected early.

It is estimated that more than 12,200 Texas women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer each year, with approximately 3,400 Texans dying from the cancer this year.

In addition to monthly self-exams, women ages 45 to 54 are encouraged to schedule a mammogram once a year. Women 55 and older are encouraged to schedule a mammogram at least every two years. According to the American Cancer Society, nearly 33 percent of women in the recommended age groups have not had a mammogram.

Family history also plays a role in how frequently a woman should undergo screening. A physician can recommend a screening schedule based on a woman’s family cancer history and other health considerations.

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Medicare, Medicaid and most private health plans cover all or part of the cost of these screenings.

According to Dr. Hart, some people have chosen to delay or postpone important healthcare services, including cancer screenings due to fear of COVID-19.

“Delaying the medical services and screenings that you need to protect your health can put your health at risk,” Hart said. “Scheduling a routine exam is a great chance to talk to your provider about your breast cancer risk and to find out whether it is time to get tested. Your health could depend on it.”

To learn more about women’s healthcare services in Knox County or to schedule an appointment with a medical provider, please call Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 or the Munday Clinic at 940-422-5271. Visit www.knoxhospital.org for more information about services and providers

About Knox County Hospital District

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.