



**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Take Control of Your Health: Early Detection Key in the Fight Against Breast Cancer**  
*Knox County Hospital District urges women to prioritize screenings and take preventive action*

KNOX CITY, Texas (Sept 27, 2024) – Breast cancer remains the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women, with roughly 1 in 8 women in the United States developing it during their lifetime. While these statistics can be daunting, early detection remains the most effective way to increase survival rates and improve treatment outcomes. Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October serves as a critical reminder for women to prioritize their health by staying informed and getting screened.

Knox County Hospital District is dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of early detection and encouraging women to take preventive measures. The hospital district is urging women of all ages to engage in regular self-exams, talk with their healthcare providers about breast cancer risk factors, and schedule routine mammograms. These actions can significantly reduce the risk of late-stage cancer diagnoses.

“Self-exams and screenings save lives. Women who understand their bodies can recognize changes earlier and act faster,” said Cindy Guess, FNP at Munday Clinic, a service of Knox County Hospital District. “We know that when breast cancer is caught early, treatment is often more effective and less invasive. The earlier we catch it, the better the outcome for the patient.”

### **Understanding the Importance of Early Detection**

The data is clear: early detection drastically improves survival rates. When breast cancer is detected in Stage 1, the five-year survival rate is nearly 99%. By contrast, survival rates drop to about 57% when the cancer reaches Stage 3, and the prognosis becomes even more challenging at Stage 4, where it has spread to other parts of the body. These stark differences in survival emphasize the importance of regular screenings and early intervention.

Guess, adds, "For women in our community, understanding breast cancer risks and making the choice to get screened are two of the most powerful steps they can take. At Knox County Hospital District, we are committed to providing women with the information, resources, and support they need to prioritize their health."

Breast cancer develops when cells in the breast grow uncontrollably, forming a tumor that can invade surrounding tissue or spread to other parts of the body. Early stages of breast cancer are often asymptomatic, which makes regular screening even more critical. Women who perform monthly self-exams are more likely to detect a lump or change in their breast tissue and report it to a physician for further evaluation.

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## Early Detection Improves Breast Cancer Treatment Outcomes

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#### **Breast Cancer in Texas: A Growing Concern**

In Texas, the fight against breast cancer is particularly urgent. This year alone, over 18,000 women in Texas are expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer, with more than 3,500 deaths anticipated as a result of the disease. These figures are not just numbers—they represent mothers, sisters, and daughters who could benefit from early detection.

For many women, fear of the unknown or concerns about the discomfort of mammograms can cause them to delay their first screening. However, modern advances in mammography have made the process quicker, more comfortable, and more accurate than ever before.

“Too often, we see women who come in for their first mammogram later in life, after years of avoiding it out of fear or anxiety. With today’s technology, the process has become so much more comfortable and streamlined,” said Guess. “Getting that first mammogram is the hardest part. Once women understand how straightforward it is, they’re usually relieved and much more willing to come back for regular screenings.”

#### **When Should Women Get Screened?**

Guidelines for breast cancer screenings vary depending on age and family history. Women aged 40 to 54 should schedule annual mammograms, while women aged 55 and older are advised to get screened every two years. Women with a family history of breast cancer or other risk factors may need to start earlier and screen more frequently. It is essential to consult with a healthcare provider to determine the appropriate screening schedule based on individual risk factors.

“At our clinics, we help women understand their risk factors and create personalized screening plans,” said c. “There’s no one-size-fits-all approach to breast cancer prevention, which is why it’s so important to talk with your healthcare provider and create a plan that’s right for you.”

#### **Coverage and Accessibility**

One of the most significant barriers to regular breast cancer screening can be cost, but many of these services are covered under health plans. Mammograms are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and most private insurance plans, making them accessible to a large portion of the population. Additionally, a doctor’s order is not required for breast cancer screenings, which allows women to take control of their health without waiting for a referral.

“We want to make sure that every woman knows she can get screened without having to jump through  
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hoops,” said Guess. “We’re here to support them every step of the way, whether it’s answering questions, providing guidance, or helping them schedule their exams.”

Knox County Hospital District encourages women to make an appointment with a healthcare provider to discuss their breast cancer risk factors and screening options. The Knox City Clinic and Munday Clinic both offer convenient, compassionate care to women seeking advice and screening services.

Scheduling a wellness exam with a healthcare provider is an excellent opportunity to discuss breast cancer risks and screenings.

To learn more about local healthcare services, or to find a provider, visit the Knox County Hospital District website at [www.knoxhospital.org](http://www.knoxhospital.org).

### **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](http://www.knoxhospital.org).

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