



Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact
Stephen Kuehler | stephen.kuehler@knoxhospital.org
940-657-3535

Knox County Encourages Action on Breast Health *Know your risk and your next step*

KNOX CITY, Texas (October 2, 2026) – When is your next mammogram due? What did your last screening show? Does a relative's cancer diagnosis change your own risk? During Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, Knox County Hospital District is encouraging women to bring these questions to Knox City Clinic or Munday Clinic and turn uncertainty into informed decisions about their care.

Breast cancer awareness involves more than recognizing the importance of early detection. It also means understanding what screening is intended to do, knowing when a concern needs medical attention and following through when additional testing is recommended. Primary care providers can help women work through each of those decisions.

"A screening recommendation should be something a patient understands, not just another item on a checklist," Cindy Guess, FNP of the Knox City Clinic, said. "We want women to know why a test is recommended, when it should happen and what comes after it. Those are questions worth asking."

One important distinction is the difference between routine screening and evaluating a breast change. Screening looks for cancer in women who do not have symptoms. A new lump, unusual nipple discharge or another change calls for an evaluation of that specific concern. Women should describe any symptoms when contacting the clinic rather than simply requesting a routine screening appointment.

Changes that warrant attention include a lump or swelling in the breast or underarm, skin dimpling, a change in breast shape, or a nipple that begins pulling inward. Redness, flaky skin, breast pain and discharge other than breast milk should also be discussed. These changes do not necessarily mean cancer, but a medical provider should evaluate them.

Women without symptoms have a different reason to check in: making sure they remain current on screening. Mammograms can find breast cancer before it causes a noticeable change. Waiting until something hurts or feels unusual can mean missing the opportunity to find it earlier.

"Feeling healthy and being due for screening can both be true," Guess said. "At the same time, a woman who notices a change should not wait until her next screening date to mention it. Helping patients understand that difference is an important part of breast health education."

For women at average risk, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends mammograms every two years from ages 40 through 74. Recommendations from other organizations differ, and some women need earlier or more frequent screening because of their risk. A provider can explain how those



recommendations apply to an individual patient. A clinic consultation helps establish that plan but does not take the place of a recommended mammogram.

Risk assessment also deserves attention when health circumstances change. A relative's recent breast cancer diagnosis, for example, is information to share with a provider. Previous breast conditions, certain inherited gene changes and a history of radiation treatment to the chest can also affect screening decisions. Knowing the type of cancer a relative had and the age at diagnosis can help inform that discussion.

The process should continue after a test is completed. Patients should understand how they will receive their results and whom to contact if they have not heard back. If additional imaging or another appointment is recommended, ask what the next step involves and when it should occur.

"Having the test is one step. Understanding the result and completing any recommended follow-up are part of the same process," Guess said. "If a letter or report is confusing, ask us to help explain it. We do not want uncertainty to become a reason that care stops."

For women who are unsure where they stand, a useful starting point is to ask their provider three questions: What is my breast cancer risk? Which screening schedule should I follow? What do I need to do next? Writing down the answers can make it easier to keep track of recommendations after the visit.

Patients are also encouraged to speak openly about difficulties completing recommended care. Work schedules, transportation and questions about expenses can affect whether an appointment happens. Letting the medical team know about those concerns creates an opportunity to discuss possible next steps.

Knox County Hospital District encourages women to use October as a starting point for ongoing attention to breast health. To discuss screening needs or a breast health concern with a primary care provider, call Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 or Munday Clinic at 940-422-5271.

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.knoxfhospital.org.

###