Breast Cancer: Understanding your risk

INSIDE: What is your risk? • Reducing your risk
How to get screened at no or low cost
Resources for help and support
Warning signs of breast cancer

It is important to know that different people have different warning signs for breast cancer. Some women have no signs or symptoms at all. If you notice any of the following symptoms or anything else that worries you, see your doctor immediately:

• A new lump in a breast or armpit
• A change in the size or shape of a breast
• Thickening or swelling of part of a breast
• Nipple pain, tenderness or bleeding
• Discharge, or fluid other than milk, coming out of a nipple
• Itchiness, scales, soreness or rash on a breast or nipple
• A nipple turning inward
• Dimpling or puckering of breast skin
• A breast that feels painful, warm or swollen

What are BRCA-1 and BRCA-2?

BRCA-1 and BRCA-2 are genes. Genes are passed from parents to children. They determine the features or characteristics you inherit from your parents – for example, your height or eye color.

Sometimes, genes become mutated, or changed, in a harmful way. When the BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 gene has a harmful mutation, it greatly increases your risk of breast cancer.

If you have a family history of breast cancer, talk to your health care provider about genetic testing to see if you inherited these harmful mutations.
Breast cancer screening

Breast cancer screening means checking a woman's breasts for cancer before there are signs or symptoms of the disease. Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early, when it is easier to treat. A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast that lets doctors look for cancer inside it that may be too small to feel. If a lump is found, you will need other tests to find out if it’s cancer.

For women at average risk of breast cancer, the American Cancer Society recommends that:

- Women ages 40 to 44 should have the choice to start annual mammograms if they wish to do so.
- Women age 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year.
- Women age 55 and older should get mammograms every two years, and have the choice to continue yearly screening. Women who are at high risk of breast cancer due to a family history of breast cancer or other factors should get a mammogram every year.

How do I get screened?

If you have Medicare, Medicaid or private health insurance:

The Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) requires Medicare, Medicaid and most private health insurance plans to provide free screening mammograms for women over the age of 40. To find a mammography provider, contact your health care provider or insurance company.

If you do NOT have Medicare, Medicaid or private health insurance:

1) The Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (BCCEDP) offers free or low-cost breast screenings and mammograms to women who are low-income and uninsured.

To see if you qualify for the BCCEDP, contact your county health department at the numbers to the right.

2) Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) offer preventive services on a sliding fee scale, regardless of the person’s ability to pay. Find a health center near you at fachc.org/resources-find-health-center.php.

3) Other resources for low-cost mammograms for women who are not eligible for the BCCEDP are available in many areas. Call the American Cancer Society at 800-227-2345 to find a program near you.

Sources: American Cancer Society, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Florida Department of Health, National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health, Prevent Cancer Foundation
The Tampa Bay Times
Newspaper in Education
program (NIE) is a cooperative
effort between schools and the
Times Publishing Co. to encourage
the use of newspapers in print and electronic form
as educational resources – a “living textbook.” Our
educational resources fall into the category of
informational text, a type of nonfiction text. The
primary purpose of informational text is to convey
information about the natural or social world.
Since the mid-1970s, NIE has provided schools with
class sets of the daily newspaper plus award-winning
original educational publications, teacher guides,
lesson plans, educator workshops and many more
resources at no cost to schools, teachers or families.
Each year, more than 5 million newspapers and
electronic licenses are provided to Tampa Bay teachers
and students free of charge thanks to our generous
individual, corporate and foundation sponsors. NIE
teaching materials cover a variety of subjects and are
correlated to the Florida Standards.

For more information about NIE, visit tampabay.com/nie
and click on the Curriculum Supplements tab for classroom activities
and a listing of the standards.

RESOURCES
for women and patients:

ABCD: After Breast Cancer Diagnosis –
abcdbreastcancersupport.org
American Cancer Society – cancer.org/cancer/breastcancer
Breast360.org – breast360.org
Breastcancer.org – breastcancer.org
CancerCare – cancercare.org/agnosis/breast_cancer
Cancer.Net – cancer.net/cancer-types/breast-cancer
Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention – cdc.gov/cancer/breast
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer
Empowered – facingourrisk.org
Living Beyond Breast Cancer – lbbc.org
National Breast Cancer Foundation –
nationalbreastcancer.org
National Cancer Institute at the National
Institutes of Health – cancer.gov/types/breast
National Comprehensive Cancer Network –
nccn.org/patients/guidelines/cancers.aspx#breast
Prevent Cancer Foundation – preventcancer.
org/learn/preventable-cancers/breast
Sisters Network Inc. – sistersnetworkinc.org
Susan G. Komen – komen.org
Young Survival Coalition – youngsurvival.org

About NIE
The Tampa Bay Times
Newspaper in Education
program (NIE) is a cooperative
effort between schools and the
Times Publishing Co. to encourage
the use of newspapers in print and electronic form
as educational resources – a “living textbook.” Our
educational resources fall into the category of
informational text, a type of nonfiction text. The
primary purpose of informational text is to convey
information about the natural or social world.
Since the mid-1970s, NIE has provided schools with
class sets of the daily newspaper plus award-winning
original educational publications, teacher guides,
lesson plans, educator workshops and many more
resources at no cost to schools, teachers or families.
Each year, more than 5 million newspapers and
electronic licenses are provided to Tampa Bay teachers
and students free of charge thanks to our generous
individual, corporate and foundation sponsors. NIE
teaching materials cover a variety of subjects and are
correlated to the Florida Standards.

For more information about NIE, visit tampabay.com/nie, call 800-333-7505, ext. 8138 or email ordernie@tampabay.com. Follow us on Twitter at Twitter.com/TBTimesNIE.

NIE staff
Jodi Pushkin, manager, jpushkin@tampabay.com
Sue Bedry, development specialist, sbedry@tampabay.com
Noelle Sansom, coordinator, nsansom@tampabay.com
© Tampa Bay Times 2016

Credits
Written by Sue Bedry, Times staff
Designed by Stacy Rector, Fluid Graphic Design LLC

Educational Components
This publication is aligned to the Florida Standards
for high school. Visit tampabay.com/nie and click on the
Curriculum Supplements tab for classroom activities
and a listing of the standards.

About the American Society of Breast Surgeons Foundation
The American Society of Breast Surgeons Foundation is a charitable organization
founded in 2005 to improve the standard of care for breast disease. The Foundation’s
mission is to advance the diagnosis and treatment of breast disease.
The American Society of Breast Surgeons Foundation supports initiatives in the research
and development of advanced breast disease treatments and technologies in order to
improve the standards for superior patient care and education by funding the following:

- Breast360.org, a state-of-the-art patient-access website for educational resources on
breast disease awareness
- The development of professional educational materials for community outreach education
- Awards for outstanding breast disease research
- The development of multilingual patient educational brochures on breast disease
- Special lectures on advanced breast cancer disease treatment technologies

The American Society of Breast Surgeons Foundation supports the mission of The
American Society of Breast Surgeons, the primary leadership organization for
general surgeons who treat patients with breast disease. The Society is committed
to continually improving the practice of breast surgery by serving as an advocate for
surgeons who seek excellence in the care of breast patients. The Society provides a forum
for the exchange of ideas and promotes education, research and the development
of advanced surgical techniques. To learn more, visit breastsurgeons.org and
breastsurgeonsfoundation.org.