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# MCHD HEALTH BLOG

*The greatest wealth of a community is the health of the people.*



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
MORGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.



## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and MCHD wants you to know what breast cancer is, ways you can prevent it, and resources in our area that can help you get connected to screenings and diagnostic tests. Since breast cancer accounted for 29% of all cancers in Ohio women in 2018, then it is worth learning about breast cancer and everything you can do to keep yourself or your loved one healthy.

The CDC says that when a person first develops breast cancer, it may be too small to feel or cause symptoms. However, as time goes on, symptoms may start to develop, such as a new lump in the breast or underarm. Other symptoms may include a change in the size or shape of the breast, pain in the nipple or breast, or nipple discharge that isn't breast milk.

If any of these symptoms worry you, talk to your doctor right away. Things that may affect your chance of getting breast cancer include being an older woman, having a 1st degree relative with breast or ovarian cancer, reproductive history and/or genetic mutations. Your doctor will talk to you about when you should start breast cancer screenings or if you should have further diagnostic testing.

Symptoms or not, the CDC recommends that all women over 50 years old should have routine breast cancer screenings. A mammogram, which is a series of X-ray pictures of the breast, is the best test for finding breast cancer early. It is important to find breast cancer as early as possible to prevent it from spreading to the rest of the body. Talk to your doctor about your options and how often they think you should be screened for breast cancer.

Studies have shown that you can reduce your risk of breast cancer by regularly exercising, maintaining a healthy weight, avoid or limit the amount of alcohol you drink, don't smoke, avoid hormone therapy, limit exposure to radiation, and get plenty of sleep. It's important to know breast cancer can occur in anyone! Talk to your doctor or visit [www.cdc.gov/cancer](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer) to learn more.

The Southeastern Ohio Breast and Cervical Cancer Project (BCCP) can help you receive no-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and tests to those who qualify. Any woman can be referred to the program to determine eligibility for services. This project provides necessary services to women who may have little resources to get them on their own. Call the Southeastern Ohio BCCP at 740-732-4958 with questions or to see if you qualify for services.