

## Breast Cancer Quiz

October 21, 2016

True or False

1. **You can get breast cancer even if it doesn't run in your family.**
  - a. **True.** Most women diagnosed with breast cancer – more than 85% – have no family history of the disease. Having a relative with breast cancer does increase your risk. But other factors such as age, being overweight, alcohol use, and hormone therapy after menopause can also increase your risk of developing breast cancer.
2. **If breast cancer runs in your family, you're sure to get it.**
  - a. **False.** Having breast cancer in your family doesn't guarantee you'll get it. Many times, cancer runs in families because they have similar lifestyle habits – habits you can control and change to lower your risk of breast cancer. This includes staying at a healthy weight, getting regular physical activity, and not smoking. If you do suspect you have an inherited gene mutation, talk to your doctor about genetic counseling. The most common defects or mutations that increase breast cancer risk are in the BRCA genes. Knowing your family history empowers you to tackle the risk factors you can control. It should also motivate you to get screened regularly so that breast cancer is caught early – when it's small, hasn't spread, and is easier to treat. Talk to your doctor about what your risk is, when you need to start screening, and whether you need extra tests beyond mammograms.
3. **You still need mammograms after menopause.**
  - a. **True.** Getting older is not a reason to skip regular breast health checks. In fact, your risk of developing breast cancer goes up as you get older. About 2 out of 3 invasive breast cancers are found in women age 55 or older. As long as you're in good health and would be a candidate for treatment, you should continue getting mammograms.
4. **Men can get breast cancer.**
  - a. **True.** More than 2,000 men are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Men should not ignore breast lumps and should get any breast changes checked. Still, breast cancer is about 100 times more common in women than men, with more than 240,000 women diagnosed in each year.
5. **Surgery and needle biopsies can cause breast cancer to spread.**
  - a. **False.** Needle biopsies to diagnose breast cancer do not cause cancer cells to spread to other parts of the body. Nor does exposure to air during breast cancer surgery cause the disease to spread. Sometimes a surgeon does find more cancer than the imaging scans or X-rays showed, but in those cases the cancer was already there. It just hadn't shown up on tests that were done
6. **There's nothing you can do to lower your breast cancer risk.**
  - a. **False.** While you can't change certain risk factors - like being female and having a family history of breast cancer - you can do a lot to help reduce your breast cancer risk as much

as possible. In a word: lifestyle. Exercise more and eat healthier, especially if you're overweight or obese. Limit or eliminate alcohol and quit smoking. Cancer prevention isn't fool-proof, but being responsible about your health can go a long way.

7. **Finding breast cancer early is the key to successful treatment.**
  - a. **True.** More than 2.8 million U.S. women with a history of the disease are alive today, mainly because of early detection. The 5-year survival rate is 100% if the cancer is found before it spreads.
8. **Older women are more likely to develop breast cancer.**
  - a. **True.** Breast cancer is more common in women over 55 years old. But women of any age can develop this disease.
9. **Most breast lumps are cancerous.**
  - a. **False.** Most breast lumps are not cancer. Still it's important to see a healthcare provider about any changes you notice in your breasts. You may need testing to be certain that you don't have cancer.
10. **It's OK to use deodorant on the day you have a mammogram.**
  - a. **False.** Using deodorant can make the X-ray hard to read. You also should not use any lotions or powders under your arms or on your breasts that day.
11. **Women who drink more than one alcoholic beverage a day increase their risk for breast cancer.**
  - a. **True.** The American Cancer Society (ACS) says the use of alcohol increases the risk of getting breast cancer. One drink a day may cause a small increased risk. Two to 5 drinks a day increases the risk to about 1.5 times the risk of women who drink no alcohol.
12. **Women who have their first child before age 30 and breastfeed for longer than 6 months are less likely to develop breast cancer.**
  - a. **True.** The risk for breast cancer increases somewhat for women who have children later in life or who have never had children.
13. **Smoking may increase your risk for breast cancer.**
  - a. **True.** The ACS says long-term heavy smoking can increase breast cancer risk.
14. **Breast cancer can be treated by surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy.**
  - a. **True.** Often more than one type of treatment is needed.
15. **Starting at age 30, women should have a mammogram every 1 or 2 years.**
  - a. **False.** Mammography is an important tool for detecting breast cancer early, when it's easiest to treat. But the benefits and limits of mammography vary based on factors like age and personal risk. Experts have different recommendations for mammography. Currently, the USPSTF recommends screening every 2 years for women ages 50 to 74. The task force says the choice of getting a mammogram every 2 years should start at age 40. The ACS recommends yearly screening for women ages 45 to 54, then a choice of screening every 1 or 2 years for women ages 55 and older. Women should talk with their healthcare provider about their personal risk factors before making a decision about when to start getting mammograms or how often they should get them.

16. **A woman's chances of developing breast cancer are higher if her mother, a sister, or daughter had it.**
- True.** The ACS says women who have a mother, sister, or daughter with breast cancer have about double the risk. Women whose close blood relatives from either the mother's or father's side of the family had breast cancer also have an increased risk for the disease.
17. **It's safe for women to use hormone therapy for a prolonged time during menopause.**
- False.** Studies have shown that long-term use of combined estrogen and progesterone hormone therapy (HT) increases the risk for breast cancer. HT may also increase the risk for heart disease, blood clots, and strokes. The risk for breast cancer drops back to normal 5 years after a woman stops HT. Taking estrogen alone does not seem to increase the risk for breast cancer. If HT is needed, it's best to use it at the lowest dose needed to control symptoms and for as short a time as possible.
18. **Regular exercise can reduce your risk for breast cancer.**
- True.** Studies show that exercise reduces the risk, but how much exercise is not known. One study found that 75 minutes to 2.5 hours per week of brisk walking reduced the risk by 18%.
19. **Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women in Idaho.**
- False.** Breast cancer is number one for new cancer cases among women. However, it is second to lung and bronchus cancer for causes of death among women.
20. **In Idaho, more than 30% of women ages 50 to 74 still need to be screened for breast cancer.**
- True.** In 2014, according to Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, 69% of women ages 50 to 74 in Idaho have been screened. Nationally, 76% of women have been screened. Idaho ranks 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation for screening.
21. **In Idaho, 5% of new cases of invasive breast cancer were diagnosed at a late stage.**
- False.** In 2013, 35% of new cases of invasive breast cancer were diagnosed at a late stage. Early detection is the key to breast cancer survival. At minimum, women should get screened with a mammogram no later than age 50 and at least every 2 years until age 74.

Sources:

<http://www.cancer.org/healthy/toolsandcalculators/quizzes/breast-cancer-quiz/index>

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?contenttypeid=40&contentid=BreastCancerCancerBrQuiz>