

PRESS CLIPPING SHEET

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Health

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is an annual campaign that is marked in all countries across the world, to upsurge awareness of the early signs, symptoms, and treatments of breast cancer.

Breast cancer is by far the most common type of cancer within women, with a yearly increase of 1.38 million new cases worldwide, according to IARC GlobalCan, 2008. The phenomenon has been uprising steadily in the past few decades among the developing countries, due to a number of turbulent factors that include adoption of western lifestyles, poor health infrastructure, and lack of awareness. The IARC GlobalCan revealed around 108,600 women were diagnosed with breast cancer in Egypt in 2012, where only 25% were able to battle the incidence. For this reason, Ladybird is providing a comprehensive overview guide to help you find all information you may need.

Breast Cancer
A Tribute to All
Strong Women

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What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a malevolent tumor that starts in the cells of the breast. It is frequently found in women, yet men can get breast cancer as well. A woman's breast is composed of glands (lobules) that can make breast milk, small tubes (ducts) that carry milk from the lobules to the nipples, and fatty, connective tissue, blood vessels, and lymph vessels. Cancer can start in any part of the three areas; however, it mostly starts in the cells that line the ducts.

The lymph system is one of the main ways breast cancer spreads. Lymph nodes are small, bean-shaped tissues that are connected by vessels and carry a clear fluid called lymph instead of blood. They are present under the arm, around the collar bone, and inside the chest near the breast bone.

Breast cancer cells travel in lymphatic vessels and grow in lymph nodes, which consequently spreads to other places in the body.

What are the types of breast cancer?

Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)

They are abnormal cells that start in the cells lining the ducts without developing through the walls of the ducts into the tissue of the breast. Because the cells haven't invaded, they cannot spread to lymph nodes or other organs. However, DCIS may become an invasive cancer, that's why it is sometimes called pre-cancer.

Invasive ductal carcinoma (IDC)

This is the most mutual type of breast cancer. It begins in the cells lining a duct, and then the abnormal cells break through the wall of the duct, invading the tissue of the breast and spreading to nearby lymph nodes.

Invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC)

This cancer starts in the cells lining the milk glands (lobules). The cells grow through the wall of the lobules and then can disperse to nearby lymph nodes or other parts of the body.

Inflammatory breast cancer (IBC)

This is a rare type of invasive breast cancer. Often, there is no single lump or tumor; however, IBC makes the skin of the breast look red and feel warm. It may also make the skin look bumpy like an orange peel. The breast may get bigger, hard, tender, or itchy.

Can breast cancer be prevented?

According to the WHO, at least one-third of all cancer cases are preventable. There are definite habits that increase the risk of developing breast cancer among women, such as tobacco smoking, physical inactivity, obesity, alcohol use, environmental pollution, infections, long exposure of ultraviolet radiation, and occupational carcinogens.

If you have a strong family history of breast cancer, it is recommended to visit a doctor and do genetics testing for mutation in genes that trigger the risk of breast cancer.

What are the common signs and symptoms?

It goes without saying that early detection of cancer drastically increases the chances of successful treatment. There are two ways to do an early detection of cancer; screening and education.

Screening is done through tests to detect a disease like cancer in people who do not have symptoms. The goal of this method is to know about the disease at an early stage, before

they start to cause symptoms. The mammogram is the main test to help you find breast cancer early.

Education about the possible signs and symptoms of cancer is fundamental, as its occurrence require prompt action before it is too late. Some early signs of breast cancer include lumps, sores that fail to heal, abnormal bleeding, skin irritation, nipple pain, nipple discharge other than breast milk, thickening of the nipple, persistent indigestion, and chronic hoarseness. Sometimes breast cancer can spread to lymph nodes under the arm, causing swelling in this area.

While the above indications do not particularly suggest breast cancer, it is imperative to have them checked out by a specialized doctor.

How to treat breast cancer?

To cure cancer, the patient must select an effective treatment program that is provided in a sustained and reasonable way, related to early detection, and adhere to evidence-based standards of care and multidisciplinary approach.

The first critical step is the diagnosis, which determines the spread of tumor. Based on the degree of spread of tumor, an adequate treatment will be selected. Among the treatment modalities are surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, and systemic therapy. The first three methods are solely used when the tumor is present in small size.

After your treatment is over, ongoing follow-up is very crucial. It is also important to keep health insurance, in case it comes back. Most importantly, no matter how hard things may get, learn to accept things that are beyond your ability, embrace them, and live your life to the fullest. ☺