

STOP BREAST CANCER IN ITS TRACKS



Cancer. It's a scary word to hear in a diagnosis for yourself or a loved one. But many cancers are highly treatable when caught early, including breast cancer. Breast cancer can affect men or women, the old or the young. Here are a few easy steps you can take to reduce your risk or catch it early.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

We'll start with the easiest step of all in detecting breast cancer early: **KNOWLEDGE.**

- You need to know your body and its lumps and bumps so you can catch anything new fast, especially around your chest or armpits. The easiest way to do that is to get in the habit of checking yourself as you bathe or get dressed.
- You need to know your family history. Find out if anyone else in your family has had breast cancer or other types of cancer, as it increases your risk of cancer.
- You need to know what screening measures are recommended for you. Talk with your primary care provider during your annual visits about what makes the most sense for you.

WHAT YOU NEED TO AVOID

There are certain chemicals, called carcinogens, that can cause cancer. They often appear in common household goods and in our environment.

- **BPA (Bisphenol A)** appears in many hard plastic items, like water bottles or plastic containers, and can damage your reproductive, nervous or immune system and increase your risk of Alzheimer's, diabetes, heart disease and more.
- **Parabens and phthalates** can be found in hygiene and cosmetic items, like shampoos or makeup. Read product labels! Parabens can disrupt your body's natural hormone balance and harm your fertility, reproductive organs and more. Phthalates can also harm your reproductive and nervous systems.
- **Car exhaust fumes and secondhand smoke** aren't just bad for your lungs and heart, they can cause cancer as well.

Eat healthy meals to help prevent cancer and improve your overall health.



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

There are some simple lifestyle tips you should also consider implementing in your everyday life to help prevent cancer and improve your overall health and wellness.

- Avoid smoking, vaping, chewing tobacco and other nicotine use
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Drink enough water every day
- Eat meals with more plants and whole grains (2/3) and less meat and dairy (1/3 or less)
- Limit highly processed foods
- Exercise for at least three to five hours per week
- Limit alcohol
- Reduce stress and practice self-care
- Take advantage of the no-cost BCBSND digital wellness center and online therapy available on [our website](#)
- Use the BCBSND online [preventative health calendar](#) to see what tests you should be having done

Breast cancer can impact anyone. But the faster it's discovered, the better your chances of beating it.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, American Cancer Society, WebMD



The monthly wellness topics are part of BlueElements—a health and wellness platform that encompasses six areas—physical, social, emotional, financial, professional and environmental.



Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. This information is available in alternate formats, free of charge, by calling Member Services at 1-844-363-8457 (toll-free) or through the North Dakota Relay at 1-800-366-6888 or 711.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-844-363-8457 (TTY: 1-800-366-6888).
ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-844-363-8457 (TTY: 1-800-366-6888).

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

BND-23-0343466A • 9-23 URAC 7.7