

# Breast Cancer in West Virginia

## Risk Factors<sup>1</sup>

There are many factors that are associated with breast cancer.

These risk factors include:

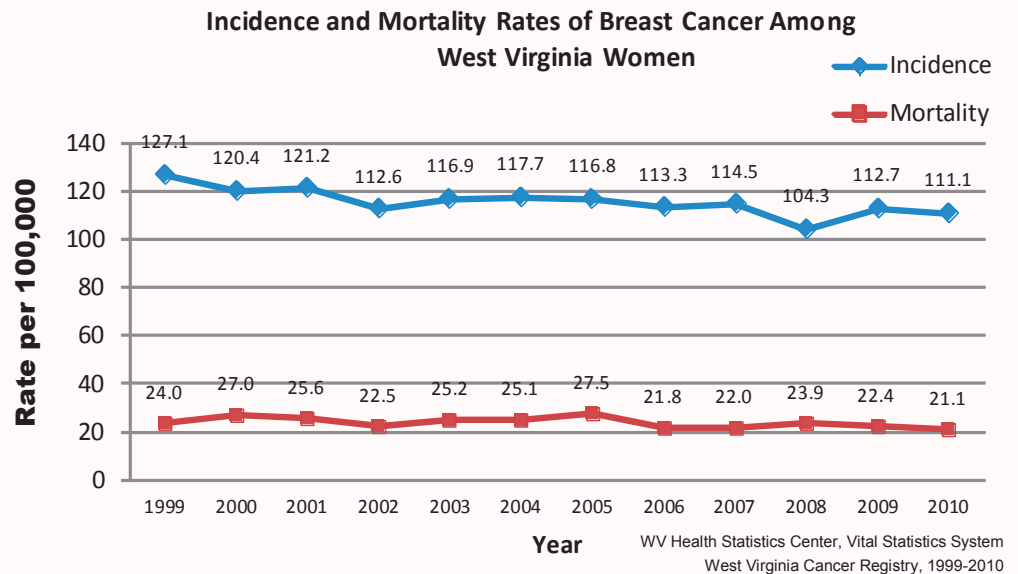
- Being female
- Increasing age
- Family history of breast cancer
- Treatment with radiation therapy to the breast/chest
- Being overweight (increases risk for breast cancer after menopause)
- Genetic factors such as BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 gene mutations
- High breast density
- Personal history of breast cancer or some other non-cancerous breast diseases
- Drinking alcohol (more than one drink per day)
- Physical inactivity
- Starting menstrual periods at a young age
- Starting menopause at a later age
- Never giving birth
- Never breastfeeding
- Long-term use of hormone therapy

## Warning Signs<sup>1</sup>

- New lump in the breast or underarm
- Thickening or swelling of the breast
- Irritation or dimpling of the breast
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- New pain in one spot that doesn't go away
- Itchy, scaly skin in the nipple area or the breast
- Nipple discharge that starts suddenly
- Any change in the size or shape of the breast

## Facts about Breast Cancer

- Breast cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells that originate in the breast.
- Getting a routine breast screening is the best way to lower your risk of dying from breast cancer. Screening can help find cancer at an early stage when treatment is most effective.
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among West Virginia women, making up almost 25% of all female cancers.<sup>2</sup>
- The majority of breast cancers are found in women; however, it does occur in men.
- Breast cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths among West Virginia women, resulting in about 300 deaths each year.<sup>3</sup>



## Screening Assistance for Low-Income and Uninsured or Underinsured West Virginia Women

The West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (WVBCCSP) provides free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services for eligible women in West Virginia.

To be eligible for the Program, a woman must be a West Virginia resident between the ages of 25 and 64 years, be uninsured or underinsured and be at or below 250% of the federal poverty level. Women who are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through the WVBCCSP may be eligible to receive treatment through the WV Medicaid Treatment Act.

For more information about the WVBCCSP, eligibility requirements, or to find a healthcare provider in your area, please call 1-800-642-8522 or visit [www.wvdhhr.org/bccsp](http://www.wvdhhr.org/bccsp).

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## Breast Cancer Screening

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes breast cancer screening as checking a woman's breast before there are signs or symptoms of the disease. The CDC supports mammography as the best way to find cancer earlier and lower the risk of death.

All women are encouraged to talk to their doctor about which tests are right for them, when to begin screening, and how often screening should occur.

## Screening Recommendations

Organization	Mammography	Clinical Breast Exam
<b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>3</sup></b>	Age 40 to 49: Talk to your doctor about when and how often you should have a screening mammogram.  Age 50 to 74: Every two years.	No recommendation
<b>National Cancer Institute<sup>6</sup></b>	Every 1 to 2 years after age 40.	No recommendation
<b>US Preventive Services Task Force<sup>7</sup></b>	Every 1-2 years from ages 50 to 74.	No recommendation
<b>American Cancer Society<sup>4</sup></b>  NOTE: Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider. Breast self-exam (BSE) is an option for women starting in their 20s.	Annually, beginning at 40 and continuing for as long as a woman is in good health.	About every three years for women in their 20s and 30s.  Annually for women beginning at 40.
<b>Susan G. Komen for the Cure<sup>5</sup></b>	Annually, beginning at age 40.	At least every three years for ages 20-39.  Annually, beginning at age 40.

**NOTE: Breast exams performed by a doctor or nurse and breast self-exams do not decrease the risk of death. All women who choose to use these exam methods should get routine screening mammograms as well.**

## References

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- West Virginia Health Statistics Center, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

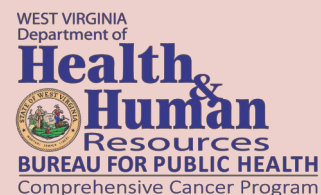
## Breast Cancer Screening Data

According to the 2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, among West Virginia women:

**Age 20-39:** 76.4% reported having a clinical breast exam in the past three years.

**40 and over:** 72.2% reported having a mammogram in the past two years and 57.4% had a clinical breast exam every year.

**Age 50-74:** 78.1% reported having a mammogram in the past two years.



For more information, please contact the West Virginia Comprehensive Cancer Program:

**[www.wvcancer.com](http://www.wvcancer.com)**  
**304-356-4193**

Funded by the Comprehensive Cancer Program of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources with support from Cooperative Agreement Number 1 U58DP003898-02 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.