

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It is an annual campaign to increase the awareness of the disease. For the entire month, [Level Up](#) will be providing you with valuable information focused on education and support.

### Risks and Prevention

According to [The American Cancer Society](#), some risk factors for breast cancer are things you cannot change, such as getting older or inheriting certain gene changes. These make your risks of breast cancer higher. Other known and possible breast cancer risk factors are:

- **Being born female.** Although men can get breast cancer too, this disease is more common in women.
- **Getting older.** As you get older, your risk of breast cancer increases. Most cases are found in women age 55 and older.
- **Inheriting certain gene changes.** About 5% to 10% of breast cancer cases are thought to be hereditary, meaning that they result directly from gene changes (mutations) passed on from a parent.
- **Having a family history of breast cancer.** Women who have close blood relatives with breast cancer have a higher risk.
- **Race and ethnicity.** Overall, white women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than African American women, although the gap between them has been closing in recent years. In women under age 45, breast cancer is more common in African American women.

Although there is no way to prevent breast cancer, you can be proactive in helping to lower your risks.

- Keep a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Limit alcoholic drinks.
- If you have a family history of breast cancer, talk to your doctor about other ways to lower your risk.

### Resources & Information

- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Susan G. Komen](#)
- Cigna [members](#)
- Kaiser Permanente [members](#)