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## DOH-PASCO PROMOTES EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT TO FIGHT BREAST CANCER



**Contact:**

Melissa Watts  
Melissa.Watts@flhealth.gov  
727-619-0163

**PASCO COUNTY, Fla.** – In recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, the Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) encourages all women to receive regular screenings to promote early detection and treatment of breast cancer. Important advances have been made through increased awareness, breast cancer screenings and better treatments.

“The good news is that most women can survive breast cancer if it’s found and treated early,” said Kathleen Yeater, MS, BSN, RN, Executive Director of Nursing at DOH-Pasco. “All women should know the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, such as a lump or swelling in the breast, upper chest or armpit, puckering or dimpling of the skin, a change in color of the breast or changes to the nipple, rash around the nipple or unusual discharge or a change in size or shape of the breast. It is important to get to know how your breasts normally look and feel so it will be easier to spot if there are any unusual changes for you.”

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), not counting some kinds of skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States, no matter a person’s race or ethnicity. The American Cancer Society estimates 19,130 new cases are expected in Florida this year alone. In 2018, 2,955 women in Florida died from female breast cancer and in Pasco County, there were 1,183 advanced-stage female breast cancers diagnosed in the ten-year period of 2007-2016; that’s an average of 118 per year.

What should women do? Make “No excuses, ladies.” Women should talk to their health care provider about their individual risk factors and the frequency of receiving mammograms, as well as complete any recommended mammogram screenings. Additionally, women can lower their risk as follows:

- Get and stay at a healthy weight
- Be physically active
- Limit or avoid alcohol
- Choose to breast-feed
- Quit smoking and or vaping

The Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (FCCEDP) provides access to the breast and cervical cancer screenings doctors recommend. The screenings are free or low cost for those who meet the program eligibility requirements.

To see if you qualify, call DOH-Pasco at 727-619-0369 or for more information, go to: <http://pasco.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/breast-and-cervical-cancer-early-detection-program/index.html>. The Pasco County BCCEDP serves Pasco, Hernando, Citrus and Sumter Counties.

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