



NEWS

R E L E A S E

Illinois Department of Public Health

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Governor Quinn Proclaims Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Illinois

An estimated 9,320 women in Illinois will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Governor Pat Quinn today declared October 2010 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Illinois to educate women about breast cancer and the importance of early detection through mammography. Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in women and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths for women. The Illinois State Cancer Registry projects 9,320 women in Illinois will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010, and an estimated 1,880 women in Illinois will lose their life to breast cancer this year.

“We are bringing a focus to breast cancer this month because awareness, prevention and early detection gives us the best chance to fight this disease that has devastated too many women and their families,” said Governor Quinn. “There’s no better time than during Breast Cancer Awareness Month to go get screened for breast cancer and eliminate risks for getting the disease.”

“Early detection of breast cancer is the key to beating the disease, and mammograms remain the best test to detect breast cancer early,” said Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Damon T. Arnold. “Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a great reminder every year for women to get screened for breast cancer and take steps to lower their risk of the disease.”

When breast cancer starts out, it is too small to feel and does not cause signs and symptoms, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As it grows, however, breast cancer can cause changes in how the breast looks or feels.

Symptoms may include:

- New lump in the breast or underarm (armpit).
- Thickening or swelling of part of the breast.
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk, including blood.
- Any change in the size or the shape of the breast.
- Pain in any area of the breast.

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Ways to lower the risk of breast cancer include:

- Exercise regularly and control your weight.
- Know your family history of breast cancer.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.

The Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP) provides free breast exams, mammograms, pelvic exams, and Pap tests to uninsured women. IBCCP has provided 29,155 women with free breast screenings in the past fiscal year alone.

For more information on breast cancer, log onto the Illinois Department of Public Health Web site at www.idph.state.il.us/cancer/types/publications_breast.htm. For more information on the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, log onto www.idph.state.il.us/about/womenshealth/ibccp/index.htm.

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