

# PROTECT THE GIRLS

## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

### What is Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer is a malignant tumor that starts from cells of the breast. A *malignant tumor* is a group of cancer cells that may invade surrounding tissues or spread (metastasize) to distant areas of the body. The disease occurs almost entirely in women, but men can develop it too.

### Am I at risk?

Currently, a woman living in the US has a 12.3% (1 in 8) lifetime risk of developing breast cancer. Younger women typically have a lower risk of developing the disease, but awareness and early detection is still the best weapon against breast cancer at any age.

### What can I do to prevent breast cancer?

There are no known ways to prevent breast cancer. However, your best option is to become aware of the risk factors, be educated about the most recent information, and have regular check ups with your physician.

#### Risk Factors:

- Genetics— Know your family history. You are at a greater risk if an immediate relative has previously been diagnosed with breast cancer .
- Physical Health—Do your best to maintain a healthy body weight and participate in physical activity on a regular basis.
- Alcohol Consumption—Having the equivalent of 2 drinks a day (or 24g of alcohol) may increase breast cancer risk by 21%.

#### The Stats:

- Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among females, accounting for more than 1 in 4 cancers diagnosed in US women.
- Caucasian women have a higher incidence of breast cancer than African American women after age 40. In contrast, African American women have a higher incidence rate before age 40.
- In 2008, an estimated 182,460 new cases of invasive and 67,770 cases of non-invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed among women in the US.

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