

PARISH NURSE NOTES – OCTOBER 2021

THINK PINK

Pink is the color du jour for October's campaign. Some people change their website's background colors to pink for the month. Others rummage through their closets and pull out pink everything — sweaters, scarves, hats, gloves, entire outfits — even wigs! Many workplaces hold Pink Days to encourage coworkers to get involved in the fight against breast cancer.

5 REASONS WHY OCTOBER IS BREAST AWARENESS MONTH

1. Breast cancer doesn't discriminate

Although breast cancer is more prevalent among American white women, African-American women tend to die from the disease more often.

2. Breast cancer can baffle scientists

Scientists don't really understand why the left breast seems to develop cancer more often than the right breast.

3. Breast cancer surgery was a trailblazer

The very first operation to use anesthesia to deaden pain was a breast cancer surgery.

4. Men get it too

Overall, only one percent of American males are diagnosed with breast cancer, but African-American men just like women in their community, are more prone to die from the disease.

5. Breast cancer — the nuns' disease

At one time, breast cancer was called "the nuns' disease" because it seemed to afflict more nuns than women in the general population.

WHY BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH IS IMPORTANT

1. It promotes self-care

Breast Cancer Awareness Month reminds women (and men) that monthly breast cancer exams should be a regular part of one's self care. If you have never performed a self-exam, ask your doctor or nurse practitioner to guide you through. Look for changes within and surrounding your breast including dimpling, redness, scaliness or nipple discharge. Granted, some breasts are a little more "lumpy" than others but changes in size or in the tissue should send up a red alert to make an appointment to see your physician.

2. It focuses on treatment

There are several different types of breast cancer. Treatment options depend on various patient factors: the stage and specific type of cancer, age and overall health at the time of diagnosis, and the patient's personal and family history. After the diagnosis, a patient should consult with family to choose a physician who can go over treatment options like surgery, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, and radiation,

3. It shouts the good news

The National Cancer Institute recently declared that the U.S. cancer rate fell for diagnosed women between 2006-2015. Also, the FDA approved an at-home genetic testing kit for women to assess whether they carry any of the three gene mutations associated with breast cancer. Oncoplastic surgery, another positive option, is a surgical "two-fer" allowing the removal of cancerous breast tissue immediately followed by the re-sculpting of the breast's remaining tissue, restoring symmetry and a more natural appearance.