

Breast Cancer Key Statistics

How common is breast cancer?

- Breast cancer is now the most common cancer in the UK
- Each year more than 44,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer, that's more than 100 women a day
- Each year around 300 men are diagnosed with breast cancer
- Breast cancer rates have increased by more than 50% over the last twenty years
- In the last ten years, breast cancer rates in the UK have increased by 12%
- 8 in 10 breast cancers are diagnosed in women aged 50 and over
- In England the NHS breast screening programme picks up around 14,000 cases of breast cancer each year
- The NHS breast screening programme in England saves around 1,400 lives each year
- Each year, in the European Union around 430,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Worldwide, more than a million women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year
- The highest rates of breast cancer occur in Northern Europe and North America and the lowest rates are in parts of Africa and Asia

How many people survive breast cancer?

- More women are surviving breast cancer than ever before
- Breast cancer survival rates have been improving for more than twenty years
- In the 1970s around 5 out of 10 breast cancer patients survived beyond five years. Now it's 8 out of 10
- Breast cancer survival rates are significantly higher among women from the most affluent areas compared to women living in the most deprived areas
- Breast cancer survival rates are better the earlier the cancer is diagnosed
- Around 9 out of 10 of women diagnosed with stage I breast cancer survives beyond five years. This drops to around 1 out of 10 diagnosed with stage IV

How many people die from breast cancer?

- Each year in the UK more than 12,000 women and around 100 men die from breast cancer
- More than half of breast cancer deaths are women aged over 70
- Each year there are around 1,400 deaths from breast cancer in women under 50
- Since peaking in the late 1980s breast cancer death rates have fallen by a third
- In the last ten years death rates for breast cancer have fallen by almost a fifth
- Breast cancer is now the second most common cause of death from cancer in women after lung cancer

What causes breast cancer?

- Women with a mother, sister or daughter diagnosed with breast cancer have an 80% higher risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer themselves
- Risk increases with the number of first-degree relatives diagnosed with breast cancer, but even so, eight out of nine breast cancers occur in women without a family history of breast cancer
- Obesity increases risk of postmenopausal breast cancer by up to 30%
- Women using hormone replacement therapy for five years or longer have a 35% increased risk of breast cancer
- Use of hormone replacement therapy causes approximately 2,000 cases of breast cancer in the UK each year
- The risk of breast cancer in current users of oral contraceptives is increased by around a quarter
- Drinking as little as one pint of beer or one glass of wine a day increases risk of breast cancer by more than 7%
- A more active lifestyle reduces breast cancer risk