

October 1, 2025

## DOH-Escambia Recognizes National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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**Pensacola, Fla. —** The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (DOH-Escambia) recognizes October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to spread important health education and encourage women to receive regular screenings to promote early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

[Breast cancer](#) is a disease in which cells in the breast grow out of control. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women in Florida. Although rare, men can also develop breast cancer. Mortality rates have [decreased by over 5%](#) in the past 10 years, partly due to improved screening, access, and treatment.

### Prevention

- Routine screening and self-breast exams are important to breast wellness. Being familiar with your breasts can help you notice signs/symptoms such as lumps, discharge, or changes in size or nipple appearance. Contact your health care provider if you notice any signs/symptoms.
- Women ages 40 to 74 should schedule a mammogram every two years with their health care provider, or with DOH-Escambia if eligible for the Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.
- [At-risk women](#) should schedule regular breast MRIs and mammograms every year. Risk factors include family history, genetics, breast density, and more.
- Healthy habits can help prevent breast cancer. A healthy lifestyle includes eating nutritious foods, avoiding alcohol and tobacco, regular physical activity, and adhering to recommended screenings.
- Breastfeeding lowers a woman's risk of getting breast cancer.

### Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program

DOH-Escambia provides access to free or low-cost breast cancer screenings to women who are uninsured or underinsured, have a low income, and meet the program eligibility requirements. Mammograms can detect breast cancer in the early stages when it is easier to treat. To see if you qualify for these screenings, call 850-316-2706 or visit the [Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program webpage](#).

Learn more about the [signs and symptoms of breast cancer](#) and the benefits of early detection.

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