

Report: Breast Cancer Death Rates Down 34% Since 1990

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A new report from the American Cancer Society finds that death rates from [breast cancer](#) in the United States have dropped 34% since 1990. But the rate at which new breast cancers are diagnosed increased slightly among African American women from 2006 to 2010, bringing those rates closer to those of white women, who still have the highest diagnosis rates among women ages 40 and older.

The findings are published in [Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2013-2014](#) and in [Breast Cancer Statistics, 2013](#) in *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*. The reports, published every 2 years, provide detailed analyses of breast cancer trends and present information on known risk factors for the disease, factors that influence survival, the latest data on prevention, early detection, treatment, and ongoing research.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, after skin cancer. It accounts for nearly 1 in 3 cancers diagnosed in women. By the end of 2013, an estimated 232,340 women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and an estimated 39,620 women will die from breast cancer. The risks generally increase with age. Almost 8 of every 10 new breast cancer cases and almost 9 of every 10 breast cancer deaths are in women 50 years old and older.

Prevention and Early Detection

- Because obesity and excess weight increase the risk of developing breast cancer, the American Cancer Society recommends that women maintain a healthy weight throughout their life. Losing even a small amount of weight has health benefits and is a good place to start.
- Growing evidence suggests that women who get regular physical activity have a 10%-20% lower risk of breast cancer compared to women who get no exercise. Doing even a little physical activity beyond your regular daily routine can have many health benefits.
- Many studies have confirmed that drinking alcohol increases the risk of breast cancer in women by about 7% to 12% for each serving per day. If you do drink alcohol, the American Cancer Society recommends women limit themselves to no more than 1 drink per day.
- A recent study by American Cancer Society researchers found that current smokers had a 12% higher risk of breast cancer than women who never smoked. Research also suggests that risk may be greater for women who begin smoking before they give birth to their first child. [Quitting](#) has numerous health benefits.
- To find breast cancer early, when treatments are more likely to be successful, the American Cancer Society [recommends](#) women 40 and older have a mammogram and clinical breast exam every year, and younger women have clinical breast exams periodically as well (preferably at least every 3 years).

Citations: *Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2013-2014*. Published October 1, 2013. American Cancer Society, Atlanta, Ga.

Breast Cancer Statistics, 2013. Published October 1, 2013 in *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*. First author Carol DeSantis, MPH, American Cancer Society, Atlanta, Ga.

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