



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Dalrymple Proclaims Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BISMARCK, N.D. – Governor Jack Dalrymple has proclaimed October 2011 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month in North Dakota.

Statistics show that one out of eight women in North Dakota will get breast cancer in her lifetime; in addition, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths. On average, 538 women were diagnosed with breast cancer and 83 women died each year from 2004 through 2008, according to the North Dakota Statewide Cancer Registry.

“Being a woman and getting older puts you at risk for developing breast cancer,” said Mary Ann Foss, director of the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control for the North Dakota Department of Health. “I encourage women to take the time to have their clinical breast exam and mammogram. Early detection is the best protection. This is something women can do to detect this disease earlier when it may be most treatable.”

Research has shown that regular screening mammography can help lower the number of deaths from breast cancer for many women. Due to the introduction of widespread screenings as well as advances in treatment, the breast cancer death rates in the United States declined by approximately 26 percent between 1975 and 2007.

Beginning at age 40, women of average risk should consider having a mammogram every one to two years. Factors that may increase the risk of getting breast cancer include a family or personal history of breast cancer, radiation therapy to the chest for a previous cancer before the age of 30, having an inherited BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation and taking estrogen plus progestin hormones for relief of menopausal symptoms. Each woman should talk to her health-care provider to determine her personal risk for breast cancer and what screening schedule is best for her. But it is important to remember even if women do not have any risk factors other than being a woman and getting older, they can still get breast cancer. Women can take measures to try to

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reduce the risk of developing breast cancer by maintaining a healthy weight and exercising regularly.

It also is important for women to be aware of what is normal for them and to see their health-care provider if they notice any breast changes. These changes could include a lump in the breast or underarm area, swelling, warmth or redness of the breast, a change in the size or shape of the breast, dimpling or puckering of the skin or pulling in of the nipple or other parts of the breast, an itchy scaly sore or rash on the nipple or spontaneous nipple discharge.

Getting a regular clinical breast exam and mammogram may be a challenge for some women. *Women's Way*, North Dakota's Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, may provide a way to pay for clinical breast exams and mammograms for eligible North Dakota women ages 40 through 64. *Women's Way* helps women who do not have health insurance; who do have health insurance but are unable to pay insurance deductibles and/or copayments; or who do not have breast and cervical cancer screening coverage through their insurance plan. Women who enroll in *Women's Way* usually receive the screening services from the health-care provider or clinic they select. Other screening services available through *Women's Way* include Pap tests and pelvic exams to detect cervical cancers or pre-cancers as early as possible.

For more information about *Women's Way*, call the toll-free number 1.800.44 WOMEN (1.800.449.6636) or visit the *Women's Way* website at www.ndhealth.gov/womensway.

For more information about Breast Cancer Awareness Month, contact Mary Ann Foss, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2472.

Please note: Proclamation follows on next page.

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PROCLAMATION
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
October 2011

WHEREAS, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women in North Dakota; and

WHEREAS, about 538 North Dakotans will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year; and

WHEREAS, nearly 4,700 North Dakotans are breast cancer survivors; and

WHEREAS, it is important to continue the fight against breast cancer and to reduce the risk of this disease among our citizens; and

WHEREAS, October 21 is National Mammography Day, a day set aside to promote the importance of regular mammography screenings in the early detection and prompt treatment of breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota women are encouraged to take preventive action; including performing monthly breast self-examinations, getting regular clinical breast examinations and following the American Cancer Society's guidelines for having a screening mammogram.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim October 2011, BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH in the State of North Dakota.

Jack Dalrymple
Governor