Fall 2012

Kaw Nation Women's Health

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Why get a flu vaccine?

According to the CDC, influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death.

Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others.

Between 1976 and 2007, estimates of flu-associated deaths in the U.S. ranged from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. **During a regular flu season, about 90 percent of deaths occur in people aged 65 and older.**

The "seasonal flu season" in the U.S. can begin as early as October and last as late as May. During this time, flu viruses circulate in the population. An annual seasonal flu vaccine — either the flu shot or the nasal spray flu vaccine — is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and lessen the chance that you will spread it to others.

When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October marks National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an international health campaign that raises awareness and empowers survivors.

There is a good chance that someone you know personally will be affected by this horrible disease in her lifetime.

Thankfully, there are many ways you can support a woman with breast cancer today:

Wear pink. For the next 31 days the color will symbolize increased awareness and fund-raising events for research, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and finding a cure. Every time you wear pink you're raising awareness for breast cancer. Awareness is key to more screenings and earlier detection.

Check local papers and websites to find local events where you can go to support the effort. You can find a breast cancer event near you. There may be walks, runs, fund-raisers and rallies to support breast cancer awareness.

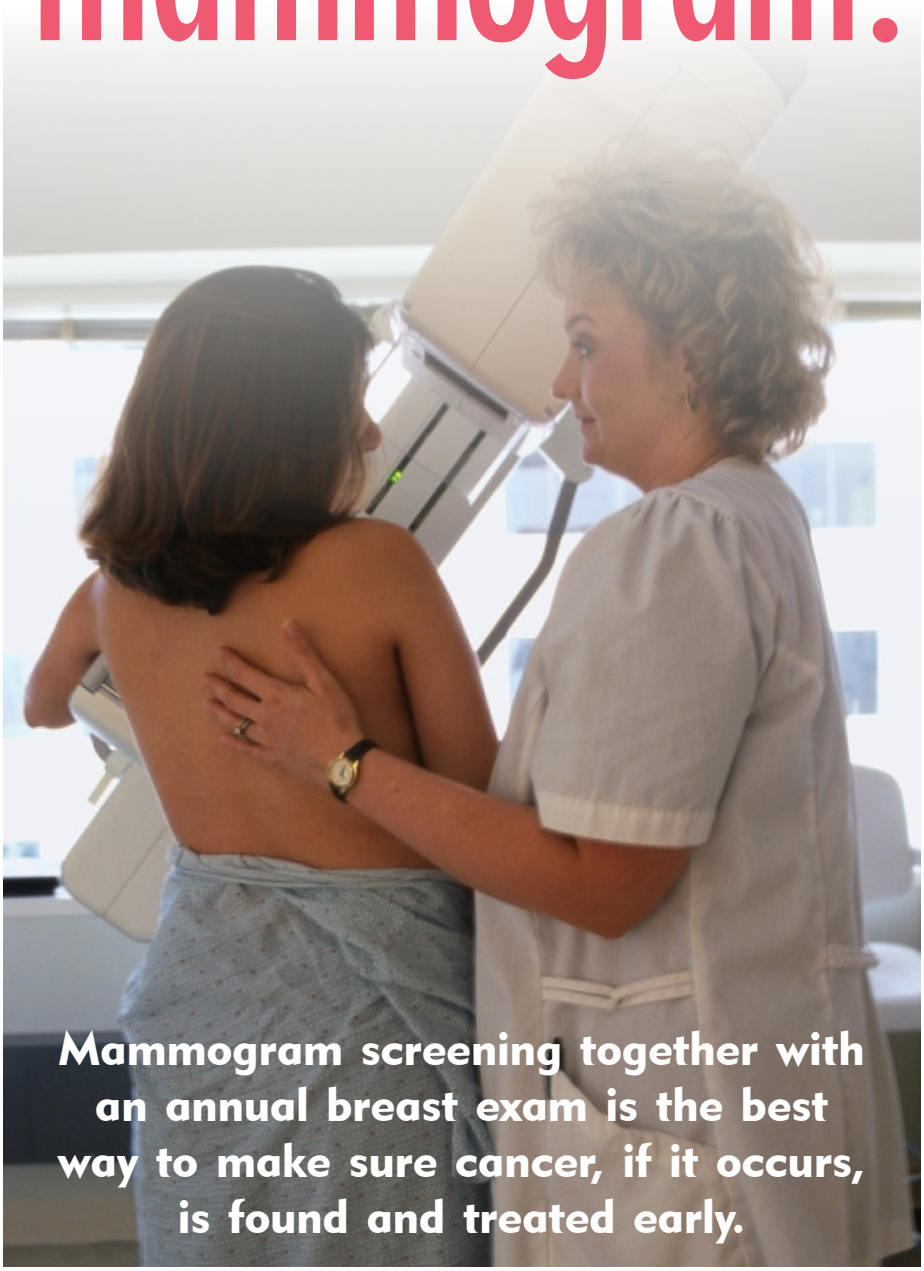
Let friends and family know about the dangers of breast cancer. A great idea is to make breast cancer pink ribbon cookies and give them out to friends and family with cards that describe how to do a self-breast exam or symptoms of breast cancer. It's a simple way of getting people to get breast cancer awareness on their minds!

Write your local newspaper and ask it to do a story on breast cancer awareness. Church parishioners can also request information to be reported in the bulletin.

Schools and teachers can make pink ribbons for art classes, or for gifts for the student's female family member.

The sky is the limit when it comes to breast cancer awareness. All it takes is for one person to get the message!

What exactly is a mammogram?



Mammogram screening together with an annual breast exam is the best way to make sure cancer, if it occurs, is found and treated early.

A mammogram is an x-ray taken of your breasts. It requires very little radiation. This exam can find lumps that are too small to be felt. In fact, a mammogram may find cancer up to two years before you can feel it.

A mammogram can also show changes in the breasts that may suggest cancer. Mammography is the best way to make sure cancer, if present, is found and treated early.

What can I expect during a mammogram?

During the mammogram, your breasts are pressed between two plastic plates, one at a time. Pressure is placed on your breasts to get a good picture. By spreading out the breast between two plates, it is easier to see lumps and other changes.

Women sometimes find it uncomfortable when the mammogram machine presses against their breasts. One idea to reduce the discomfort is to take two aspirins or acetaminophen an hour before you have the screening done, unless you've been warned by your doctor against taking aspirin.

Does mammography guarantee finding cancer if it is present?

Unfortunately, mammography misses about 10 to 12 percent of breast cancers. Younger women with dense breast tissue are the ones most likely to have their cancers go undetected.

The bottom line is this: as good as the technology is in catching cancer early, mammography by itself is not enough to screen for breast cancer. You must have a clinical breast exam and do breast self-exams too.

What is a 'clinical' breast exam?

At least once a year, it is important to have a clinical breast exam. Clinical breast exams are done by health care providers skilled in checking women's breasts. The exam can be done during your regular annual checkup or before your scheduled mammogram.

Getting the best mammogram

- Schedule your mammogram when your breasts will be the least tender if you can. You can reduce the discomfort of a mammogram by taking two aspirins or acetaminophen an hour before you have the screening done, unless you have been warned by your doctor against taking aspirin.
- Know what to expect. Ask your health care provider ahead of time how the mammogram process works, what the experience feels like, and what the x-ray technician can do to make you feel more comfortable.
- Wear a two-piece outfit to make undressing more convenient and private.
- Avoid wearing deodorant and lotions that day. These can affect the (x-ray) film results.
- If any followup exams are recommended, schedule them right away.
- Get a mammogram screening every year if you are over 50, so that your health provider can track normal and abnormal changes.

Things to know about abnormal mammograms

Along with the increased use of mammography is the higher chance that a woman will have a report that comes out labeled 'abnormal' or is considered 'suspicious'

Source of information for this article was "Native Women's Breast and Cervical Health"

It may sound scary, but there are many different reasons why a woman's mammography report may contain the words "abnormal" or "suspicious."

For one thing, a repeat mammogram may be necessary because the quality of the mammogram did not turn out. Movement during an examination can cause a blur on the film. Sometimes breast tissue that is difficult to get a good picture of looks "uneven." It might just be that dust or deodorant flecks got on the image. Finally, it night be that the film didn't develop properly.

An abnormal reading may indicate a benign cyst, a lump that is not cancerous but needs to be looked at further. Of course, there is also the possibility that there is suspicion of breast cancer.

What to do if you get an abnormal report

Your health care provider will contact you and let you know where to get followup "diagnostic" mammogram screening.

If the results are still "suspicious," but the mass is thought to be a cyst, an image can be taken using sound waves called a *sonogram* (ultrasound). It can determine whether a mass is a hollow cyst that can be drained or a solid that may require *biopsy.*

A **biopsy** can either be done by inserting a needle into the tissue to remove a small amount of fluid, tissues or cells, or by surgically cutting a small piece of tissue for testing. Sometimes, a biopsy will remove all of a small lump. If a biopsy is recommended, your tribal women's program staff will assist you in finding a surgeon who is an expert in breast cancer procedures. You need not feel alone in the process.

If you have a confirmed diagnosis of breast cancer…

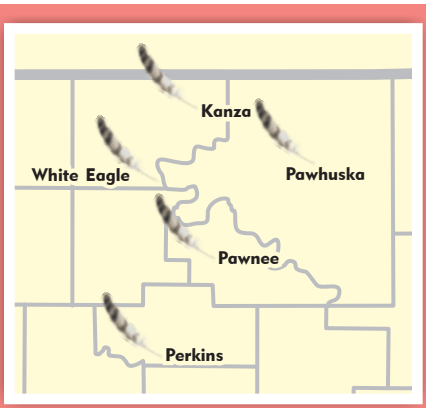
Stay calm. A diagnosis of breast cancer requires thoughtful, informed decision-making. Your tribal program staff will assist you every step along the way, from surgeon referrals to cancer support groups.

Ideally, you will select and begin your treatment within six weeks after a biopsy confirmed breast cancer. This is true whether it is *premalignant ("in situ")* or *invasive* cancer (has the ability to spread).

The best way to get the best treatment is to become informed about your breast cancer:

- Keep in touch with your tribal women's program staff. They are there to support you.
- Find out all the facts, and learn as much as you can about your personal diagnosis. You have the right to obtain, and should request copies of all your important medical records.
- If you find this overwhelming, ask a relative to be your advocate, the person who is willing to make the phone calls and ask the questions for and with you.
- Talk to others who have "been there." Although each case is uniquely her own, talking to a breast cancer survivor can be a helpful way to understand the disease and be a source of inspiration and comfort to you. Other helpful ways may be to get group support, individual counseling and spiritual guidance.

Putting yourself first can be a difficult task when you are used to putting your family before yourself. Trust that they will understand your needs and be very willing to support you too, if you let them know this is a time you need their help and cooperation.



Contact your clinic to schedule an appointment with the Kaw Nation Women's Health Program

Kanza
580-362-1039

White Eagle
580-765-2501

Pawnee
918-762-2517

Pawhuska
918-287-4491

Perkins
405-547-2473

The **Kaw Nation Women's Health Program** does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, religion, national origin, language, education, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV status or disability.

Ask if you are eligible for our program.

Examinations are performed by a female Nurse Practitioner/CDC Screener.

Sponsored by
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Cancer Prevention and Control
4470 Buford Highway NE
Atlanta, GA 30341-3717

Kaw Women's Health Program
3151 East River Road
P.O. Box 474
Newkirk, OK 74647
Office 580-362-1039
Fax 580-362-1467

Good nutrition leads to good health

A woman needs good food to do her daily work and to prevent illness. And yet, women in Indian Country often suffer from poor nutrition. This can cause exhaustion, weakness, disability and general poor health.

There are many reasons for poor nutrition and not eating well. One main reason is lack of access to nutritional food. Another is not making it a priority to take the time to prepare and eat nutritional meals.

Modern life makes us think it is easier to "just go through the drive-thru" for dinner than to take the time to prepare a well-balanced meal. Recipes from our grandmothers may have worked well for then, but in today's time, when we may not get as much exercise, we need to cut down on the fat content of our meals and make sure we get the right balance of nutrition in the food we eat. As women, we set the example for our families and our children for how to eat healthy.

We, as native women, have challenges to face in our generation including diabetes, cancer and heart disease. Serving and eating a nutritious meal will help not only us and this generation, but will influence following generations.

— From *Journey Woman, A Native Woman's Guide to Wellness*

Chicken Tamale Casserole

Amounts per serving
354 calories
36% calories from fat
14.1g fat
7.1g saturated fat
3.3g monounsaturated fat
1.2g polyunsaturated fat
18.9g protein
36.3g carbohydrates
2.5g fiber
58mg cholesterol
1.7mg iron
620mg sodium
179mg calcium

Ingredients
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded 4-cheese Mexican blend cheese, divided
1/3 cup fat-free milk
1/4 cup egg substitute
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
1 (14 3/4-ounce) can cream-style corn
1 (8.5-ounce) box corn muffin mix (such as Martha White)
1 (4-ounce) can chopped green chilies, drained
Cooking spray
1 (10-ounce) can red enchilada sauce (such as Old El Paso)
2 cups shredded cooked chicken breast
1/2 cup fat-free sour cream

Directions
Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Combine 1/4 cup cheese and next seven ingredients (through chilies) in a large bowl, stirring just until moist. Pour mixture into a 13-by-9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray.

Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until set. Pierce entire surface liberally with a fork; pour enchilada sauce over top. Top with chicken; sprinkle with remaining 3/4 cup cheese. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until cheese melts.

Remove from oven; let stand 5 minutes. Cut into 8 pieces; top each serving with 1 tablespoon sour cream.