

# Breast Health Radio Show Activity

**Objective:** To review breast health and wellness messages.

**Helpful Materials:** One copy of the script for each participant or one caller question for each participant.

**Note:** This activity was adapted from the *Understanding Cancer Activity Guide* by Dr. Melany Cueva from the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

**Directions:** Give participants the following questions to ask as a caller. Trainers may select a participant to read the role of the expert and the announcer. Trainers may also elect to read the role of the expert and the announcer.

# Breast Health Radio Show Activity

**Radio Announcer:** Hello. Welcome to Wellness Ways Talk radio. Today we have with us several experts to talk about good breast health. The telephone lines are open, so call in with your breast health questions. Hello, hello, do I have caller #1.

**Caller #1:** Wow, this is a really cool radio show. I was wondering, if no one in my family has had breast cancer do I still need to be concerned about developing breast cancer?

**Expert:** Yes, even if no one in your family has had breast cancer, it is an important part of your health care to include having a mammogram every year once you turn 40 and doing monthly self breast exams and having a yearly clinical breast exam. About 90% to 95% of women who develop breast cancer do not have a family history of breast cancer. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among all women and we want to find it early when it can be best treated. The biggest risk factors for developing breast cancer is just being a woman and getting older. Thanks for your question Caller #1. Caller #2, how can I help you?

**Caller #2:** My friend's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer; does that mean my friend will get breast cancer?

**Expert:** No, just because your friend's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer it does not mean your friend will for sure develop breast cancer. A woman's breast cancer risk doubles if she has one first-degree relative (mother, sister, or daughter) with breast cancer. If she has two first-degree relatives with breast cancer her risk increases 5-fold. Women with a family history of breast cancer in male family members also have an increased risk of breast cancer. However keep in mind that only about 5% to 10% of all women diagnosed with breast cancer are due to a family history of the disease. Do I have a Caller #3?

**Caller #3:** The lines have been busy. I'm so glad to finally get through. I was doing my monthly self breast exam and noticed an unusual lump in my breast. It has me pretty worried. Do I have breast cancer?

**Expert:** Good for you for being aware of changes in your breasts by doing your self exam. You cannot tell just by feeling or looking at your breasts if you have breast cancer. One of the reasons we do breast exams is to find breast changes early that may be breast cancer. That is great that you are doing monthly self breast exams as one way to take good care of your health. The best thing to do if you have a concern about your breast is to see your health care provider. Thank you for calling and please talk with your provider right away. Caller #4, how can I help you?

**Caller #4:** My mom's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer when she was 45. When should my mom start having yearly mammograms?

**Expert:** It may be best for your mom to begin having a yearly mammogram at age 35. Your mom will want to talk with her health care provider about when to begin having her yearly mammograms.

Usually, it is recommended to begin having a yearly mammogram 10 years before the family member was diagnosed with breast cancer. Remember the reason to have a mammogram is to find breast changes early that may be cancer. Next caller: Caller #5.

**Caller #5:** Why is it important to find breast cancer early?

**Expert:** The earlier a breast cancer is diagnosed and treated the better the prognosis or outcome. Breast cancer found and treated during stage 1 before it has spread to lymph nodes or another part of the body has a good chance of being cured. Do I have Caller #6?

**Caller #6:** My sister just had a normal mammogram about 6 months ago and she is not due for her yearly mammogram for another 6 months but she started noticing leaking from her nipple. She is not breast feeding, what should she do?

**Expert:** Leaking from a nipple sounds like a new breast change for your sister. Even though your sister had a recent normal mammogram, it is important for her to see her health care provider. Perhaps she will feel more comfortable if you go with her to her appointment. Thanks for being concerned about your sister and supporting her to see her health care provider. How can I help you, Caller #7?

**Caller #7:** I'm 40 and feel great. Why should I get a mammogram if my breasts feel fine?

**Expert:** Congratulations on being 40 and feeling great! It is important to have a mammogram even if your breasts feel fine to help find breast changes early which may be cancer before they can be seen or felt. A yearly mammogram is an opportunity for you to take care of yourself, stay healthier longer, and become a role model for your family and friends. It is much easier to treat breast cancer when it is found early. Caller #8?

**Caller #8:** I heard that having a mammogram hurts? Ouch. That does not sound like fun.

**Expert:** A mammogram should not hurt. It may cause discomfort while the breasts are being compressed for the x-ray. The pressure is necessary to take the best x-ray or picture of the breast tissue. Any discomfort will be short term. Ways to reduce discomfort during a mammogram include taking a Tylenol prior to the next mammogram or scheduling the mammogram 3-5 days after a menstrual period when breasts are less tender. Remember, a few seconds of discomfort can lead to a longer and healthier life. Know that you are taking good care of your health.

**Caller #9:** I'm worried that the radiation from a mammogram might cause cancer?

**Expert:** The amount of radiation exposure from a mammogram is very low. The radiation that you receive during one mammogram is the same amount you receive from your natural surroundings during a 3 month period. We have time for one more call. Last caller, how can I help you?

**Caller #10:** Why do I need to get a mammogram every year?

**Expert:** Having a mammogram every year makes it easier for the radiologist to see changes in the breast tissue which may be cancer. The first mammogram provides a baseline or beginning x-ray

picture. Think of it like collecting a breast photo album to see breast changes from one year to the next. Mammograms can show breast changes, which may be cancer even before they can be felt on exam.

**Radio Announcer:** Thank you to everyone out there in radio land. That ends this afternoon's Wellness Ways Talk Show. A big round of applause to all our callers for asking such helpful questions for all of us to learn about breast health. Also it has been very helpful to have so many experts call in and share their knowledge about breast health. If you have more questions please talk with your health care provider.