

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast health is part of your health and well-being. Breast cancer starts when breast cells become abnormal and start to grow out of control. Men and women may both develop breast cancer.

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. It is one test that is commonly used to look for breast cancer. There are two types of mammograms.

- A screening mammogram looks for signs of breast cancer before any symptoms appear.
- A diagnostic mammogram looks for breast cancer in women who have symptoms. Or it is done if you had an abnormal screening mammogram. It's also used to find an area of suspicious breast tissue to remove for a biopsy.

Surgery is a main treatment for breast cancer. Surgery is most often a lumpectomy to remove part of the breast or a mastectomy to remove the whole breast.

If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer and require surgery, breast surgery in Alberta is a same-day surgery, so you'll come to the hospital and go home (be discharged) on the same day. Same-day surgery is safe and most people prefer to recover at home rather than in the hospital. Your surgeon will consider your health and living arrangements to make sure it's safe for you to go home the same day of your surgery. In special cases, you may need to stay in the hospital overnight.

If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer, contact your local chapter of the Canadian Cancer Society or call 1-888-939-3333 to find a support group in your area. Talking with other people who have faced similar situations can be very helpful.