

October 2022



Breast Cancer Awareness & Intimate Partner/ Gun Violence



Dr. Avis Artis, MD
Retired OB/GYN

Before you begin reading this month's message, let us know how we are doing to keep you informed! Please complete the short survey at the following link
[COMMUNITYHEALTHCOALITIONHEALTHTIPSURVEY!](https://www.communityhealthcoalition.org/healthtipsurvey)

October is the month that we spotlight Breast Cancer, Domestic and Gun Violence!

What's New for Breast Cancer Awareness in 2022!

Following the pandemic, we are finally able to return to a more normal accepted way of life. Which means most of us should be vaccinated and boosted and ready to return to our annual health screenings. Breast Cancer continues to be the most common diagnosis of cancer among African American women and the leading cause of cancer death. In 2022, there will be **36,260** new cases and approximately **6,800** deaths nationwide. While black women are diagnosed with breast cancer less often, it is more often fatal. Triple negative (a more aggressive type of tumor with a faster growth rate), and inflammatory cancers are twice as frequent in African American women and much more difficult to treat. Thus, these women have much lower overall survival rates.

What can you do for yourself?

- Do your monthly breast exams **NOT** as a substitute for mammogram cancer screening but to learn what is normal for you! Then you will recognize changes in **YOUR** breasts.
- Continue your annual mammogram screenings. Some radiologists may discover some enlarged axillary (near the armpit) lymph nodes if you have been recently vaccinated. This finding should **NOT** be alarming! You should not delay your vaccines or your mammograms.
- Limit Alcohol intake! One drink per day increases the risk of breast cancer by 7-10%, 2-3 drinks per day increase the risk by **20%**.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle. The risk of breast cancer after menopause is higher for women who gained weight as an adult.
- Consider breastfeeding as this decreases the risk of breast cancer (especially if continued for one year).
- Avoid menopausal hormone replacement therapy longer than four years.
- Begin screening earlier if you are at high risk (some examples of high risks are you have a strong family history of young women with the diagnosis of breast or ovarian cancer, or a history of radiation to your chest from other illness).

Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious public health problem. The term describes actual or threatened physical, psychological, or sexual harm by a current or former partner or spouse. Abusive relationships often begin as verbal and emotional abuse but may become physical.

Examples of emotionally/psychologically abusive behavior include:

- Controlling partner's finances
- Demeaning partner in public or private
- Harassing partner at work

Examples of physical abuse including:

- Hitting
- Pushing
- Shoving



The use of physical force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act (rape) against his/her will, whether or not the act is completed, is known as sexual abuse. Most experience the first episode of IPV in adolescence. In females rape occurred before age 18 is 40% and before age 25 is 80%. Thirty percent of males experienced their first rape before age 10.

Gun Violence

According to the American Public Health Association (APHA) gun violence is a major public health problem and a leading cause of premature deaths in the United States. Gun violence affects people of all ages and races in the U.S. but has a disproportionate impact on young adults, males and racial/ethnic minorities. Among U.S. residents ages 15-24, homicide is the fourth leading cause of death for non-Hispanic whites, the second leading cause of death for Hispanics and the leading cause of death for non-Hispanic blacks. Each year, more than 39,000 people in the United States die as a result of gun violence, and tens of thousands more suffer non-fatal gun injuries.

What can we do? We can encourage political officials to enact 1) commonsense gun policies (requiring criminal background checks for all firearms purchases), and 2) extreme risk protection orders (allowing family members or law enforcement to petition a judge to temporarily remove a firearm from a person deemed at risk of harming themselves or others). Let's come together and put an **END** to gun violence.

For More Information

Please visit the following resources:

- American Cancer Society - 800.227.2345 or www.cancer.org
- UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center - 1.984.974.8762
- Living Beyond Breast Cancer - 1.888.753.LBCC (5222)
- Durham Crisis Response Center for Domestic Violence at 919.403.6562
- InStepp, Inc. for Domestic Violence at 919.680.8000 or www.instepp.org

Remember to Visit, Call or Email Community Health Coalition:

www.communityhealthcoalition.com, call (919)470-8680, and/or email contact@communityhealthcoalition.com.