Managing TNBC Risk

There is no surefire way to prevent any type of cancer, including triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC).

However, this guide can help you learn about:

- Your chance (risk) of getting TNBC
- Helping your loved ones and others in your community learn about their family medical history and how it may affect their chances of having breast cancer
- How to catch TNBC early, when it may be easier to treat

We can all make a difference in our communities by encouraging our loved ones to discuss family medical history and by encouraging our loved ones to get screened, particularly if they are at risk.

Who has a higher chance of getting TNBC?

Anyone can get TNBC. However, it is more common in women who:

- Are younger than 40
- Are African-American
- Have a mutation in a gene that makes you more likely to get breast cancer

Your risk of getting any type of breast cancer rises if:

- You have had breast cancer before
- Other people in your family have had breast cancer or have mutations in their genes
- You are overweight and post-menopausal, do not get enough exercise, smoke tobacco, or drink a lot of alcohol

If you choose to talk with your loved ones about their chance of getting breast cancer, keep in mind that getting cancer is no one's fault. Just encourage them to make changes such as being active and quitting smoking.

Why is TNBC more common in Black women?

No one knows exactly why TNBC is more common in Black women. However, it clearly is.

Among all women with breast cancer, about

10%–15%

have TNBC.

2X

Non-Hispanic Black women are about **2 times** more likely than non-Hispanic white women to have TNBC.

If you want to learn more about how TNBC impacts the Black community, check out this docuseries at uncoverTNBC.com/watch.

Now that you have a better understanding of some risk factors associated with TNBC, it is important to know your options for screening and genetic testing.

Screening for breast cancer

Get screened for breast cancer as recommended by your health care provider, especially if you have a higher chance of having it. The earlier you find signs of cancer, the easier it can be to treat. Ask your doctor which types of screening tests are right for you.

What are some types of breast cancer screening tests?

- A mammogram (X-ray of the breast) allows doctors to look for changes in breast tissue. For most women, this is the best way to find breast cancer early.
- A breast MRI uses magnets and radio waves to take pictures of the breast. Doctors use MRI along with mammograms to screen women who have a high chance of breast cancer.

Where can I get screened?

You can get screened for breast cancer at a clinic, hospital, or doctor's office. Call your doctor's office for help scheduling a screening.

Does health insurance cover screening?

Most health insurance plans are required to cover screening mammograms every 1-2 years for women starting at age 40 with no out-of-pocket costs (co-pay, deductible, or co-insurance).

How can I find out if breast cancer runs in my family?

Consider talking with your parents or grandparents to see if they or other family members have had breast cancer or other types of cancer. Write down what you find out and share it with your doctor.

If other people in your family have had breast cancer, ask your doctor about getting tested. They can help you to find a testing center and to understand your results.

Genetic testing

You can get your genes tested to see if you have mutations (changes) in genes that are linked to a higher chance of breast cancer, such as *BRCA* genes. These mutations can be passed down from your parents or grandparents.

Knowing if you have a mutation — or not — can help you make smart choices about your health.

If genetic testing shows you have a mutation, ask the genetic counselor if other members of your family may have a higher chance of having breast cancer. You will need to talk with family members who are affected. These conversations can be hard because no one wants to think about getting cancer. However, it may encourage them to get regular screenings to catch breast cancer early, when it's easier to treat.

When is genetic testing recommended?

According to the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, genetic testing for *BRCA* genes is recommended for people with:

- A family member with a *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* inherited gene mutation or other high-risk inherited gene mutation related to breast cancer
- A personal or family history of breast cancer at age 45 or younger
- A personal history of TNBC diagnosed at age 60 or younger
- A personal history of breast cancer at age 46-50 **and** a close family member (such as a parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or first cousin) diagnosed with breast cancer at any age
- A personal history of breast cancer at any age **and** a close family member diagnosed with breast cancer at age 50 or younger
- A personal history of breast cancer at any age **and** 2 or more close family members diagnosed with breast cancer at any age
- A family member (such as a parent, sibling, child, grandparents, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece) diagnosed with breast cancer at age 45 or younger
- A personal or family history of ovarian cancer, pancreatic cancer, aggressive prostate cancer, or metastatic (spreading) prostate cancer at any age
- A personal or family history of male breast cancer
- Ashkenazi Jewish heritage **and** a personal or family history of breast cancer

Call your insurance company to ask if genetic counseling or testing will be covered under your health insurance plan. If you do not have health insurance, speak with a social worker or hospital financial specialist to learn about options that may help pay for testing.

For more information about TNBC, please visit our website at uncoverTNBC.com.

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