

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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Every October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month people all over the world show their support for those affected by breast cancer. Whatever your age or gender, knowing your body and being aware of the symptoms of breast cancer is really important.

What are the symptoms of breast cancer?

Cancer Research UK says that you should see a doctor if you notice any of the following:



- A change in the size, shape or feel of the breast
- Skin changes such as puckering, dimpling, a rash or redness of the skin
- Changes in the position of a nipple
- A new lump or thickening in a breast or armpit
- Fluid leaking from a nipple when you aren't pregnant or breast feeding
- Breast pain

These symptoms don't necessarily mean you have breast cancer. But if you experience any of them, it's important to get checked by a doctor. You can also visit the [Cancer Research UK website](#) to find out more about early breast cancer symptoms.

Evidence tells us drinking alcohol increases a person's risk of developing breast cancer.^{1,2,3} Not everyone who drinks alcohol will get breast cancer, but the risk starts to increase even at low levels of drinking. **The good news is, the less you drink, the more you reduce your risk.**



Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK and about 1 in 13 (8%) cases are estimated to be attributable to alcohol.⁵



Did you know?

Many people don't realise that men can get breast cancer too. Breast cancer is rare in men however, men should also see their GP if they notice any of the symptoms of breast cancer.^{6,7}



How can I reduce my risk?

Cancer Research UK estimates that almost a quarter (23%) of cases of breast cancer are preventable.⁴ Making healthy lifestyle choices such as not drinking more than a few units a week or not drinking at all, not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, and getting regular physical exercise, can all help to reduce the risk of breast cancer.



Need help cutting down?

If you're interested in cutting down your drinking try downloading our free **MyDrinkaware app**. It can help you keep track of your alcohol units and increase **drink-free days** each week.



Further information

If you're looking to find local cancer support and information services – the **NHS website** has a list of support services [here](#).

References

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- ^[3] Connor, J. (2017). Alcohol consumption as a cause of cancer. *Addiction*, 112(2), 222-228.
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