

Alaska Cancer Facts: Breast Cancer Screening for Providers

Why is Breast Cancer Screening Important?

Breast cancer is one of the top 3 incidents of cancer in Alaska.

Breast cancer typically produces no symptoms when the tumor is small and most treatable. Therefore, it is very important for women to follow recommended screening guidelines for detecting breast cancer at an early stage, before symptoms develop.

For most women, predicting breast cancer risk on the basis of possible risk factors can be unreliable. Fully 70% of all women diagnosed with breast cancer had no known risk before the time of diagnosis.

What Can Health Care Providers Do?

We know that the number one reason women get screened is because a provider recommended it.

- Talk to women about breast health.
- Refer women for mammograms when appropriate.
- Refer women to **1-800-410-6266** if they need assistance with payment.

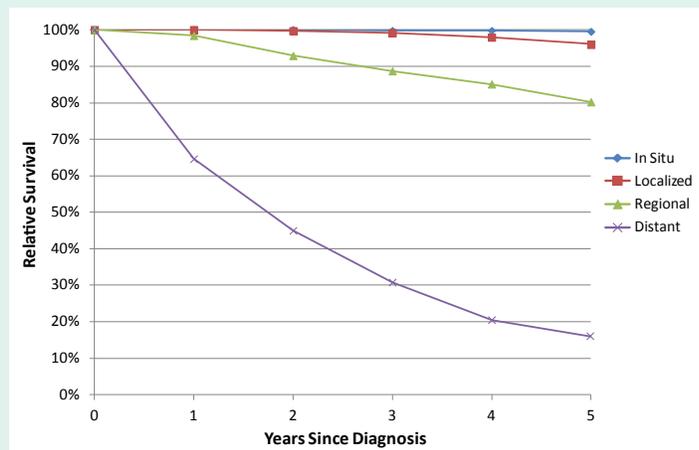
We Can Do Better!

Alaska ranks 35th in the nation for breast cancer screening. The percentage of Alaska women ages 50 - 74 who have had a mammogram within the past 2 years has dropped over the past 10 years (BRFSS data 2000 - 2012).

- Statewide – **86% (2000) to 74% (2012)**
- Anchorage/Mat-Su – **88% (2000) to 74% (2012)**
- Southeast – **82% (2000) to 75% (2012)**
- Gulf Coast – **84% (2000) to 67% (2012)**

Survival greatly increases when cancer is found at an early stage.

Figure 1: AK Female Cancer Relative Survival Rate by Years Since Diagnosis, Diagnosis Years 1996-2010



There are Five Breast Cancer Detection Programs in Alaska



How do these programs impact Alaska?

- Since 1995 the combined group has screened over 75,000 women needing financial help.
- During that time 6,289 breast cancers were detected statewide.

Become a BCHC Provider — contact us at: 1-800-410-6266



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Alaska Breast & Cervical Health Partnership
dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Cancer/comprehensive.aspx

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