

# CANCER AWARENESS & PREVENTION



**T**HE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER TOUCHES ALL OF US, EITHER PERSONALLY OR THROUGH OUR LOVED ONES.

In 2023, an estimated 609,820 people will die of cancer in the United States. Lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and thyroid cancer are the most common among women.

The cancer burden continues to grow globally, exerting tremendous physical, emotional and financial strain on individuals, families, communities and health systems. In countries like the United States, where health systems are strong, survival rates of many types of cancers continue to improve thanks to accessible early detection, quality treatment and survivorship care.

In this special section, we feature a collection of articles provided by some of the leading authorities on the disease. These articles provide news of recent statistics, breakthroughs and learnings, and some philosophies on the ever-important issue of screenings and prevention.

## CANCER AWARENESS &amp; PREVENTION

# State-of-the-Art Breast Health Center Opens in Glendale

The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center at Adventist Health Glendale will serve as a world-class treatment and resource hub for Southern California patients.

**B**reast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed among women in the US and is the second leading cause of death from cancer among women. One in eight women will develop breast cancer.

For many women, accessing breast care – from screening and diagnosis to treatment – can be complex. Later-stage diagnosis and delays to care can lead to life-threatening complications.

The team of experts at Adventist Health Glendale's new breast health center aim to change the national narrative by bridging care gaps and centralizing services at a single location.

On June 1, 2023, Adventist Health Glendale officially opened The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center, a state-of-the-art treatment center offering more than 15 specialized breast health services.

Led by internationally renowned breast surgeon Dr. Dennis Holmes, the Center's expert surgeons, oncologists, radiologists and nurses tailor care to each patient's needs.

The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center arose to fill the Southland's void for elevated, expedited, cutting-edge care. Too often, Dr. Holmes has seen or heard of cases where delayed or complicated access to care resulted in dire consequences for patients. Recent studies indicate that every month of delayed treatment can raise mortality risk by an average of 10%.

"Our goal is to change how breast cancer care is managed today. Not just by practicing the standard of care, but by raising the standard of care locally, nationally and even globally," stated Dr. Holmes, the Center's medical director.

Locally, the Center is the first in the Los Angeles metro area with dedicated medical staff for patients with benign care needs, including – a breast wellness clinic, survivorship clinic and a high-risk clinic for patients with elevated risk for breast cancer.

"From a national standpoint, we intend to raise the benchmark for expedited care. Whether someone is diagnosed here or elsewhere, our policy is to see all newly diagnosed breast cancer



patients within one-to-two days. That is practice change that can help save lives. We believe this should be the new national standard," shared Dr. Holmes.

The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center patients will benefit from cutting-edge treatments, including targeted intraoperative partial breast radiotherapy and cryoablation.

Targeted Intraoperative radiotherapy (IORT) is a form of breast radiation administered as a single treatment during a lumpectomy to reduce the risk of cancer recurrence.

As a type of partial breast irradiation, IORT directs the radiation treatment to the tumor site, focusing on where the risk of recurrence is highest. This minimally invasive treatment spares the rest of the breast and surrounding tissues (e.g., lungs and heart) from radiation side effects.

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"Intraoperative radiotherapy typically takes just 30 minutes to deliver," explained Dr. Holmes. "By comparison, traditional whole breast radiotherapy administers varying degrees of radiation to the entire breast, chest wall and nearby organs. Where traditional radiation treatments can take several weeks to complete, intraoperative radiotherapy is showing to be equally as effective with a single dose."

The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center is also pioneering clinical trials affecting cancer treatment globally. At the forefront, the Center is conducting a clinical trial utilizing cryoablation instead of surgery to treat stage 0 breast cancer. The groundbreaking cryoablation treatment, also referred to as tumor freezing, has been used for many years on skin and cervical cancers. Dr. Holmes has also been selected to lead a national clinical trial of cryoablation to treat stage I breast cancer. The trial is slated to open later this year and many patients are expected to be enrolled at the Center.

The procedure is comparable to an ultrasound-guided needle biopsy of the breast and typically takes about one hour from start to finish. Cryoablation is performed with the patient

awake and comfortable, using a minimally invasive cryoprobe to freeze the tumor and a surrounding rim at a cancer-killing temperature of -185° Celsius.

Additional specialty services offered at the Center include lymphedema screening using the SOZO device, the world's most advanced bioimpedance spectroscopy (BIS) device, to diagnose and assess lymphedema (arm swelling) in less than 30 seconds, both before and after treatment.

The Center's genetic counselors can evaluate patients' personal or familial risks of carrying breast cancer mutations. Genetic counseling can help patients make informed decisions with their care team. By understanding a patient's hereditary risks, steps can be taken to lessen one's chances of developing cancer or allow for early detection.

Offering comprehensive services includes taking care of patients well after they leave the exam or operating room. The Center also provides vital programs like survivorship planning, support groups, mental health counseling, and cosmetic and prosthesis services.

"Access to expert-level care should not be limited to certain communities. Through The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center, patients all across Southern California will benefit from our transformative, life-saving care," shared Alice Issai, president of Adventist Health Glendale. "We know that breast care can be a challenging experience. Whether you need routine screening, are concerned about pain or changes in your breasts or need options for a complicated cancer diagnosis, we are here for you."

*The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center at Adventist Health Glendale is now open. To learn more or to make an appointment, call (818) 630-8680.*



# LA's Health and Wellness Partner

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## CANCER AWARENESS &amp; PREVENTION

# The Bottom Line on Screening for Colorectal Cancer

By ASHWIN ASHOK MD

Colorectal cancer may not be something you think about on a regular basis, and the thought of getting screened for the disease may have you thinking “not me—I don’t want to do that!” But like I tell many of my patients, getting a regular colorectal cancer screening is one of the best and easiest things you can do to prevent this disease.

Unfortunately, most people don’t get early warning signs if they have colorectal cancer. Even if there are signs, they may resemble other conditions, like irritable bowel syndrome or even hemorrhoids, so it may not prompt them to have a doctor check for cancer. That’s why many people who have colorectal cancer (and don’t get screened regularly) don’t find out until the cancer is advanced—and why colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer behind lung cancer.

## When should I begin colorectal cancer screenings?

Nearly 90% of colorectal cancer occurs in people who are age 50 or older, but cases in younger adults have been rising. Doctors now recommend that people at average risk for colorectal cancer get screened beginning at age 45.

If you are at an increased risk for the disease, it may be recommended that you begin screening at a younger age. Even if you have no signs of colorectal cancer, you should still be screened. You may have a higher risk of colon cancer if you:

- Are of certain race or ethnic background,

such as African American or Jewish

- Have a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps (growths in the large intestine), or previous colorectal cancer

- Have inflammatory bowel diseases, such as Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis

- Eat a diet high in fat, red meat, or alcohol

- Have a history of tobacco use

## Do I have options when it comes to colorectal cancer screenings?

The short answer is “yes.” There are different options that you can talk to your doctor about. Colonoscopy is considered the best of these options as it allows us to prevent as well as diagnose colon cancer.

## Why is screening so important?

Since colorectal cancer typically doesn’t result in noticeable symptoms until more advanced stages, it may be too late to treat it successfully if you wait until you have symp-



toms. Actress Kirstie Alley was diagnosed only shortly before she passed away in December 2022 from the disease. Chadwick Boseman, “Black Panther” film star, lost his battle with colon cancer at the age of 43 after being diagnosed with an advanced stage of the disease a few years earlier.

Colorectal cancer screenings can find cancer at an early stage, before symptoms may be present. This makes it more easily treatable. Screenings may also detect abnormalities that may become cancerous in the future, such as polyps. If found during a colonoscopy, these can be removed before cancer develops. When this happens, the screening can be considered

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to have prevented the disease from occurring at all.

The best thing to do is talk to your doctor about your family history. If you’re 45 or older or have a family history of colon cancer, you should schedule an appointment for a colonoscopy screening today. It’s best not to delay this screening because it could save your life.

You can find progressive, comprehensive care for your colorectal health in LA County at PIH Health. PIH Health offers effective diagnostic tests and advanced treatment options to help you feel better and prevent future health problems. To learn more, visit [PIHHealth.org/Colon](http://PIHHealth.org/Colon) or call (562) 967-2656 to schedule an appointment.

Ashwin Ashook MD is a member of the PIH Health’s Digestive Health Services team, a group of experts specializing in gastrointestinal health. To find a PIH Health Physician near you, visit [PIHHealth.org/Find-a-Doctor](http://PIHHealth.org/Find-a-Doctor).



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# Majority of Americans Are Not Up to Date on Cancer Screenings

In the Prevent Cancer Foundation’s first annual Early Detection Survey, 65% of Americans 21 years of age and older say they are not up to date with one or more routine cancer screenings. The cancer screenings studied in this survey were for breast cancer, cervical cancer, colorectal cancer, oral cancer, lung cancer, prostate cancer, skin cancer and testicular cancer.

According to the data, most Americans are better about filing their taxes, renewing their car tags and getting their car’s oil changed than scheduling a routine cancer screening.

These findings, released this past February, emphasize the need for increased awareness and access to recommended screenings for prevention and early detection. Early detection of cancer can mean less extensive treatment, more treatment options and better chances of survival, leading to better outcomes.

Despite the importance of early detection, many people are still not getting the routine screenings they need. Survey participants cite not knowing they need to be screened (39%), not having symptoms (37%) and inability to afford the cost (31%) as top reasons for not being up to date. Additionally, 40% of respondents said they have never discussed routine cancer screenings with their health care provider.

To educate Americans on the routine cancer screenings they need and encourage them to schedule appointments, the Prevent Cancer Foundation is launching a new signature cam-

paign — “Early Detection = Better Outcomes.”

“When people learn the benefits of early detection, they are much more likely to talk to their doctors and get screened to check their health,” said Jody Hoyos, CEO of the Prevent Cancer Foundation. “Routine screenings should be part of your wellness routine, just like eating healthy, exercising and taking care of your mental health.”

The Early Detection = Better Outcomes campaign shares helpful information, such as screenings you need at every age, tools to find free and low-cost cancer screenings and information on how your family health history can impact your cancer risk. A new interactive tool delivers a personalized screening plan that you can take with you to the doctor’s office.

The survey highlights the need for culturally relevant resources tailored for Hispanic and Black communities. Hispanic participants reported significantly lower rates for breast cancer screening (46%) compared to Black participants (61%) and white participants (63%). For colorectal cancer screening, Hispanic participants (46%) and Black participants (54%) reported significantly lower rates than white participants (61%).

Additional findings reveal that nearly half of the people surveyed are more vigilant about their health since the pandemic. Yet, a third (33%) of Americans surveyed say that potential exposure to COVID-19 continues to have a negative impact on whether they go to their

routine medical appointments.

Results also show a need for continued innovation with less invasive tests and more at-home test options. Among those who said they are not up to date or are not sure if they are up to date on at least one of their cancer screenings, 40% said having an at-home test option would make them likely to prioritize one or more of their routine cancer screenings.

The Prevent Cancer Foundation is the only US-based nonprofit organization solely dedicated to cancer prevention and early detection. Through research, education, outreach and advocacy, it has helped countless people avoid a cancer diagnosis or detect their cancer early enough to be successfully treated.

For more information, please visit [preventcancer.org](http://preventcancer.org).



# Transforming breast care

## We're proud to introduce The Sam and Grace Carvajal Comprehensive Breast Center

Breast health is one of the most important aspects of a woman's well-being. That's why Adventist Health Glendale has brought together all the elements she needs—from screening to diagnosis to treatment and beyond—under one roof. Our state-of-the-art services, which include the latest in mammography, treatment options, research, clinical trials and much more, ensure each patient receives the individual care and attention she deserves.



To learn more, scan the QR code or visit  
[AdventistHealthGlendale.org/BreastCare](https://AdventistHealthGlendale.org/BreastCare)

**Adventist Health**  
Glendale

CANCER AWARENESS & PREVENTION

# Regular and Increasing Number of Breast Cancer Screenings Improves Probability of Survival

New research led by an international team supported by the American Cancer Society (ACS) shows women with an increasing number of regular mammography screening exams prior to diagnosis of breast cancer considerably improved their probability of survival. The findings were presented at this year's annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) last week.

In this study, researchers, including presenting author Dr. Robert Smith, senior vice president, early cancer detection science at the American Cancer Society, analyzed incidence and survival data on 37,079 women ages 40-69 from nine Swedish counties who had between one and five invitations to screening and were diagnosed with breast cancer between 1992 and 2016. Of these, 4,564 subsequently died of breast cancer.

For each breast cancer diagnosed, scientists obtained data on previous screening history, and subsequent death (or not) from breast cancer. Comparisons of survival with respect to numbers of screening exams attended prior to a diagnosis of breast cancer were carried out using Cox proportional hazards regression with time-varying covariates, ie, cumulative numbers of screens, yielding hazard ratios, and 95% confidence intervals (CI). Study results were also corrected for potential self-selection bias, which gave a corrected estimate based on the proportion of participants, the uncorrected estimate, and

the relative risk of breast cancer death for non-participants compared to an uninvited population.

The results showed, for a woman who participated in all five previous screening exams, the hazard of breast cancer death was 0.28, compared to a woman who had participated in none of the screening rounds. For each number of invitations, the difference in survival by number of screening exams attended was progressively more favorable, and statistically significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ) in all cases compared to women participating in no screens.

Researchers noted the importance of regular participation in mammography screening should be clearly articulated in breast cancer screening messaging and decision aids.

Other study authors include: Stephen Duffy, Dr. Amy Ming-Fang Yen, Dr. Laszlo Tabar, Dr. Abbie Ting-Yu, Dr. Sam Li-Sheng Chen, Dr. Chen-Yang Hsu, Dr. Peter Dean and Dr. Tony Hsiu-His Chen.

*The American Cancer Society is a leading cancer-fighting organization with a vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. For more than 100 years, it has been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support.*

To learn more, visit [cancer.org](http://cancer.org) or call ACS' 24/7 helpline at 1-800-227-2345.



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