

BREAST CANCER
— A W A R E N E S S —

*Every
Journey*
MATTERS

— OCTOBER 2026 —



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION

Each October, people across the country unite to raise awareness and support for the millions of people affected by breast cancer. Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) reminds us that awareness is important—but it's our actions that save lives.

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the breast. There are many different types of breast cancer that can affect both women and men.

To determine the extent of an individual's breast cancer and if it has spread outside of the breast, the cancer is assigned a stage upon diagnosis. The early detection of breast cancer through annual mammography and other breast exams is the best defense against receiving a late-stage breast cancer diagnosis. Generally speaking, the earlier the cancer is detected, the greater the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Breast Cancer by the Numbers

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in American women, except for skin cancers. Awareness is the first step toward taking meaningful action. 1 in 8 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. This year, approximately 382,640 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer—including 321,910

with invasive breast cancer and 60,730 with non-invasive (in situ) breast cancer. Chances are, you know at least one person who has been personally affected by breast cancer.

But there is hope. When caught in its earliest, localized stages, the 5-year relative survival rate is over 99%. Advances in early detection and treatment methods have significantly increased breast cancer survival rates in recent years, and there are currently over 4 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

Awareness of the facts and statistics surrounding breast cancer in the United States is key in empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their health.

In 2026, an estimated 382,640 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, including 321,910 with invasive breast cancer and 60,730 with non-invasive (in situ) breast cancer.

There are currently over 4 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

An estimated 168,000 breast cancer survivors in the U.S. are living with Stage 4 metastatic breast cancer.

An estimated 42,140 U.S. women will die from breast cancer in 2026.

Risk of breast cancer recurrence depends on the type and staging of the initial breast cancer. Typically, the highest risk of recurrence is during the first few years after treatment and decreases over time.

Breast cancer incidence in the United States

1 in 8 women, or approximately 13% of the

female population in the U.S., will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in American women, except for skin cancers.

Approximately 30% of all new female cancer diagnoses will be breast cancer.

On average, every 2 minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States.

Approximately 66% of breast cancer cases are diagnosed at a localized stage, before cancer has spread outside of the breast, when it is easiest to treat.

The 5-year relative survival rate for early-stage cancer diagnosed at the localized stage is over 99%.

Approximately 10-15% of women diagnosed have a family history of breast cancer. Those with a first-degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) with breast cancer are nearly twice as likely to develop breast cancer themselves.

Breast cancer statistics by age

Though breast cancer in the United States occurs primarily in middle-aged and older women, age is not the only risk factor for a breast cancer diagnosis. Many risk factors beyond age may contribute to a breast cancer diagnosis, and sometimes there are no discernable risk factors at all.

The median age of U.S. women diagnosed with breast cancer is 62 years old.

Half of U.S. women who develop breast cancer are 62 years of age or younger when they are diagnosed.

About 10% of all new breast cancer cases in the



1 in 8 women

in the United States will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.



U.S. are diagnosed in women younger than 45 years old.

Younger people, particularly those under age 35 at the time of their original breast cancer diagnosis, face a higher risk of breast cancer recurrence.

Awareness matters

Awareness is the first step in making informed choices about breast health.

Early detecton matters! Breast cancer found in its earliest stages is often easier to treat and less likely to have spread beyond the breast. Although no screening method can prevent breast cancer, staying familiar with how your breasts normally look and feel, getting recommended screenings, and promptly reporting any breast changes gives you the best opportunity to detect breast cancer as early as possible.

Every person should know

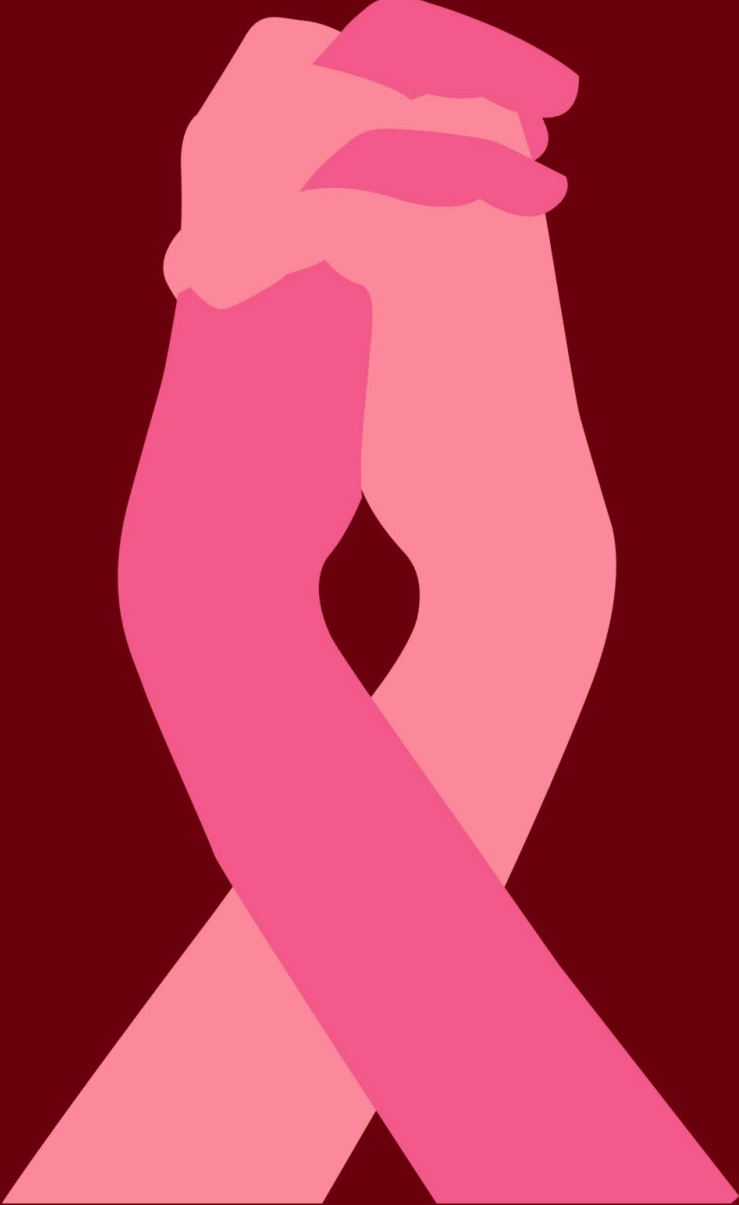
the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, and any time an abnormality is discovered, it should be investigated by a healthcare professional.

Most people who have breast cancer signs and symptoms will initially notice only one or two, and the presence of these signs and symptoms do not automatically mean that you have breast cancer.

By performing monthly breast self-exams, you will be able to more easily identify any changes in your breasts. Be sure to talk to your healthcare professional if you notice anything unusual.

Our Know the Symptoms Guide

To learn more about symptoms, tesing and next steps, visit our Know the Symptoms Guide by visiting the National Breast Cancer Foundation [HERE](#)



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

2026



Hamilton to host Pink Day for breast cancer awareness on Friday, October 23rd

HAMILTON - VITRUVIAN HEALTH

Hamilton – Vitruvian Health will host a Pink Day (breast cancer awareness) event on Friday, Oct. 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Burr Park, 101 South Hamilton St., Dalton.

The event will include free cookies, pink lemonade, breast cancer awareness giveaways (while supplies last), health and wellness vendors and a lunch available for purchase through a vendor. Free car magnets and yard signs will also be available while supplies last. The Peeples Cancer Institute's (PCI) new mobile mammography unit, Mammography on the go, will be at the event also.

Designed to make preventive care more convenient care more convenient and accessible for Northwest Georgia residents, the coach is equipped with the GE Pristina, an advanced 3D mammography system that combines exceptional image quality with a more comfortable patient experience. The mobile unit features the same state-of-the-art technology available at PCI, with all examinations interpreted by board-certified radiologists.

At 11:30 a.m., Megan Massey, MD, surgeon at Hamilton Physician Group – General Surgery, will speak.

“With October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it’s a good time to be proactive,” said Taylor Martin, community outreach coordinator. “Nobody wants to hear a diagnosis of breast cancer, but early detection can make a huge difference.”

Regular breast self-exams, clinical breast exams and mammograms (based on age and health history) are recommended as the best way to detect breast cancer in the early stages.

Some habits that can help reduce risk for breast cancer are maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, eating fruits and vegetables, not smoking and limiting alcohol consumption.

Peeples Cancer Institute (PCI) at Hamilton Medical Center includes: Dalton’s only Breast Imaging Center

of Excellence; a comprehensive team of board-certified medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, radiologists and general surgeons/breast specialists; 3D digital mammography; breast ultrasound; 3D stereotactic breast biopsy; state-of-the-art radiation therapies; customized treatment plans; genetic testing and counseling; patient navigation and oncology social work services; and breast surgery and reconstruction.

To schedule a mammogram at PCI, please call 706-272-6565, or to schedule a mammogram on the Mammography on the go (mobile unit), please call 706-281-8309 or email MobileMammoScheduling@vhcs.org. Day, evening and weekend appointments are available at PCI. To schedule a mammogram at Hamilton Health – Calhoun, please call 762-268-4906.

About Hamilton Physician Group – General Surgery

Hamilton Physician Group – General Surgery specializes in general surgery techniques with an emphasis on minimally invasive procedures. The practice provides a comprehensive program to ensure successful outcomes. The expert team provides a full range of surgical services, including general, laparoscopic, breast cancer surgery, and new technologies to treat acid reflux and hernias. Services are coordinated with doctors in other specialties as well as your primary care physician to ensure everyone is working together to provide you with the best possible care.

About Peeples Cancer Institute
Accredited by the American College of Surgeons - Commission on Cancer, the 46,000-square-foot Peeples Cancer Institute (PCI) at Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) centralizes patient-centered care and outpatient cancer services in one convenient location, allowing for HMC’s expert team of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and clinical support staff to work collaboratively

PINK DAY!

FRIDAY

OCTOBER

23

11 am - 1 pm

Burr Performing Arts Park

101 South Hamilton Street

Dalton, GA

to provide state-of-the-art care in a healing, nurturing environment.

PCI includes: board-certified medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and radiologists; state-of-the-art radiation therapies, including the Varian® TrueBeam linear accelerator and 4D CT Simulator; customized treatment plans; genetic testing and counseling; 3D mammography and ultrasound imaging (with expanded evening options for mammography); private and semi-private infusion rooms; medical nutrition by a registered dietician; a bistro with Starbucks coffee, smoothies and light refreshments; and patient navigation and oncology social work services. PCI patients also have the ability to participate in various clinical trials through PCI's relationship with the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University.

About Hamilton Medical Center
The flagship affiliate for Vitruvian Health's Northwest Georgia region, Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) is a 255-bed regional acute-care hospital that offers major medical, surgical and diagnostic services, including accredited stroke and chest pain centers. Advanced technology and

wellness are two significant areas of focus for HMC. Services include the freestanding Hamilton Ambulatory Surgery Center, Hamilton Diagnostics Center, and Bradley Wellness Center, as well as a Level III trauma center, Peeples Cancer Institute, Heart & Vascular program (including open heart surgery), Bandy Endoscopy Center, Hamilton Spine Health and Sport, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and more.

About Vitruvian Health
Vitruvian Health, formerly Hamilton Health Care System, is a not-for-profit, fully integrated health system serving the Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee regions. Vitruvian includes Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, Ga., and Bradley Medical Center in Cleveland, Tenn., affiliated physician practices, walk-in care centers, retirement and skilled nursing centers, a diagnostic center, a cancer institute, an institute for children with developmental delays, and more. Known for its advanced care and personalized service, Vitruvian Health offers innovative treatment options in state-of-the-art facilities while maintaining a compassionate, friendly and tranquil healing environment.

STRONGER TOGETHER

EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES

Breast cancer affects 1 in 8 women.

Early detection is key to increasing survival rates. This October, let’s stand together in raising awareness for the importance of mammograms, self-exams, and regular check-ups. Together, we can save lives!

STRONGER TOGETHER
EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES
SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM
706.272.6565
Hamilton Peeples Cancer Institute Vitruvian Health

Visit Peeples Cancer Institute or any Hamilton primary care or walk-in care location in October to pick up a magnet or yard sign!

STRONGER TOGETHER
SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM
706.272.6565

SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM

Day, Evening & Weekend Appointments!

Mammography on the go

706.281.8309 or MobileMammoScheduling@vhcs.org
at Peeples Cancer Institute: 706.272.6565

Hamilton Peeples Cancer Institute

Vitruvian Health

VitruvianHealth.com/breast-health

AdventHealth Georgia challenges community to light porches pink for breast cancer awareness

ADVENTHEALTH GEORGIA

Throughout the month of October, the AdventHealth cancer care teams are challenging our community once again to light porches pink across Northwest Georgia to spread awareness of breast cancer.

The “Light Your Porch Pink” movement shines a light on breast cancer, which affects one in eight women and is easily treatable when caught early. Community members are invited to participate in this experience by installing a pink light bulb in their front porch light socket, creating a pink evening glow.

Mammograms truly save lives, so we’re also encouraging women to schedule their annual mammogram at one of our AdventHealth locations in Rome, Calhoun or Chatsworth. With 3D mammograms in 30 minutes, we’re making it easy to get screened.

Thousands of pink light bulbs will be distributed across Northwest Georgia starting September 14, 2026. Light bulbs are available for pick-up at the following locations while supplies last:

- AdventHealth Cancer Pavilion

641 Braves Boulevard

Rome, GA 30161
- AdventHealth Gordon: East Entrance Lobby

1035 Red Bud Road

Calhoun, GA 30701
- AdventHealth Gordon: Edna Owens Breast Center

1035 Red Bud Road

Calhoun, GA 30701
- AdventHealth Gordon: North

- Entrance Lobby

1035 Red Bud Road

Calhoun, GA 30701
- AdventHealth Murray: Main Entrance Lobby

707 Old Dalton Road

Chatsworth, GA 30705
- AdventHealth Redmond: Main Entrance Lobby

501 Redmond Road

Rome, GA 30165
- AdventHealth Redmond: Outpatient Entrance

501 Redmond Road

Rome, GA 30165
- AdventHealth Medical Group: Family and Internal Medicine at Cedartown

1168 North Main Street Suite 110

Cedartown, GA 30125
- AdventHealth Medical Group: Family and Internal Medicine at Medical Drive

12 Medical Drive, Northeast

Cartersville, GA 30120
- AdventHealth Medical Group: Family Medicine at Trion

160 Central Avenue

Trion, GA 30753
- AdventHealth Medical Group: Family and Occupational Medicine at Shorter Avenue

2112 Shorter Avenue Northwest, Suite 200

Rome, GA 30165
- AdventHealth Medical Group: Internal Medicine at East 2nd Avenue

715 East 2nd Avenue SW



- Rome, GA 30161
- AdventHealth Medical Group Primary Care at John Maddox Drive

7 John Maddox Drive

Rome, GA 30165
- AdventHealth Medical Group Primary Care at W 10th Street

309 West 10th Street

Rome, GA 30165
- AdventHealth Medical Group Primary and Urgent Care at Rockmart

1063 Nathan Dean Bypass

Rockmart, GA 30153
- AdventHealth Medical Group Primary Care and Urgent Care at Summerville

9777 Rome Boulevard

Summerville, GA 30747

When lighting your porch pink, be sure to take photos and share them on social media with the #PinkPorchGA hashtag, along with your reasons for shining a light on breast cancer. Whether it’s a message of remembrance, a celebration of survivorship, or a reflection on your own journey, your voice matters.

“Seeing our community light up in pink is a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience of those impacted by breast cancer,” said Josefer Montes, executive director of marketing and brand at AdventHealth Georgia. “We hope this visible show of support continues to spark conversations and encourage loved ones to prioritize regular screenings.”

For more information on lighting your porch pink or to schedule a mammogram, please visit [PinkPorchGA.com](#).

Breast cancer isn’t at morning coffee.

Kathy is.

A photograph of two women sitting at a small table outdoors. The woman on the left is older, with short grey hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and grey pants. She is holding a white coffee cup. The woman on the right is younger, with long dark hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and grey pants. She is also holding a white coffee cup. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the foreground, there is a large planter with colorful flowers. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

The AdventHealth logo, which consists of a stylized four-leaf clover icon above the word "AdventHealth" in a bold, sans-serif font.

Every Journey Matters

Illuminating the Fight Against Breast Cancer

ADVENTHEALTH GORDON

“I might just cancel the mammogram,” Jessica Littlefield told her husband before her October 2024 appointment. With no family history of the disease, the 32-year-old mother of two preschoolers was not expecting a breast cancer diagnosis. A physical exam had not found anything concerning, but the mammogram, followed by an ultrasound and biopsy, revealed cancer.

The Calhoun mom of two preschoolers had been having pain in her right breast for a couple of weeks when she went to AdventHealth Medical Group OB/GYN at Curtis Parkway to have it checked out.

“I’ve had cysts before, so I thought it could be something like that,” Littlefield said. “I was not thinking it could be breast cancer.”

A physical exam didn’t detect anything of concern such as a knot, but her provider ordered a mammogram at the Edna Owens Breast Center at AdventHealth Gordon for a more thorough assessment.

Littlefield, then 32, had no family history of cancer and was younger than 40, the age women at average risk for breast cancer are encouraged to start screening annually for the disease.

Littlefield thought about canceling the mammogram due to her nerves, but friends and family encouraged her to keep the appointment. When she arrived at the breast center in October 2024 for the mammogram, she declined the complimentary breast cancer awareness t-shirt offered to her.

“I thought, ‘If I take this, I’m somewhat accepting a diagnosis,’” she said.

She said the staff at the center, an American College of Radiology Breast Imaging Center of Excellence, made her feel comfortable and she took comfort in a scripture passage on the waiting room wall.

“Then they came to me in the waiting room and said they needed to do an ultrasound because I had dense breast tissue,” she said.

The doctor reviewing the images also recommended a biopsy.

“That’s when I was like, ‘Something’s up,’” she said. A few

days later, it was confirmed that she had cancer.

Under the care of Mayur Mody, MD, a fellowship-trained and board-certified oncologist at AdventHealth Medical Group Hematology Oncology at Calhoun, Littlefield’s treatment included six rounds of chemotherapy, 18 immunotherapy infusions and a double mastectomy, followed by surgery to reconstruct her breasts.

While the clusters of tumors were contained to her right breast, she opted to remove both breasts for peace of mind.

“If it came back in the other breast, I would have to do this all over again, and I didn’t want to have to do anything again,” she said.

Littlefield said she’s grateful the nurse practitioner ordered the mammogram and that she kept the appointment.

“If not, I would still be walking around clueless,” she said. “We were able to catch an early-stage and not a late-stage breast cancer.”

Health experts agree mammography is one of the best ways to detect breast cancers early, often before patients have symptoms, when treatments are more effective, increasing the chances of survival.

“I’ve seen so many young women since I’ve been in this club I didn’t sign up for ... who have this diagnosis, and I feel getting a mammogram is so important to catching it early,” Littlefield said.

In addition to mammography, the Edna Owens Breast Center offers breast ultrasound, MRI, CT and PET scans, biopsy care, as well as bone density scans.

Littlefield also took advantage of genetic screening and nutrition counseling available to cancer patients there.

“Often times you have to look for and seek out these services, but at AdventHealth, they come around and just check in, and I really thought that was great,” she said.

Her breast nurse navigator also connected Littlefield to cancer support groups and the center’s Beautiful You program, which provides support by nurturing the body, mind and spirit of the women undergoing cancer treatment.

“I wanted to connect with people who are going through a hard time,



ABOVE: Jessica Littlefield, lighting her porch pink this National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. BELOW: Jessica and her mother, Lorie Jones. BELOW LEFT: Jessica and her husband, Caleb Littlefield.



but who are uplifting and can share with each other,” Littlefield said. “That community is joy filled and it helps make the walk lighter.”

Littlefield said the care she received at the center was personal and compassionate, with her cancer care team going beyond expectations throughout her treatment and recovery.

“I would highly recommend their facility and their doctors and their nurses,” she said.

She even went back to the center following her diagnosis to get the shirt she had previously declined.

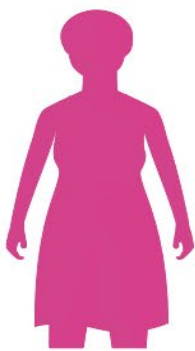
“That was kind of a full circle moment, even though I didn’t really

want that full circle,” she said.

Today, Littlefield said she is feeling like herself again, and she’ll be lighting up her porch in pink this October as part of AdventHealth’s Pink Porch campaign to raise awareness about the importance of getting an annual mammogram.

“You can’t see too far in the future when you’re going through it,” she said. “Now that I’ve gone through it, things are okay and every step of the way, I know God is right here.”

For more information on lighting your porch pink, where to pick up a pink bulb or to schedule a mammogram, please visit PinkPorchGA.com.



1 IN 8 WOMEN
in the united states will develop
breast cancer in her lifetime

AdventHealth Gordon’s tower turns pink for breast cancer awareness

Brandi Owczarz
staff@gordongazettega.com

On Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026, AdventHealth Gordon turned pink with a special ceremony to bring awareness to the fight against breast cancer outside the Edna Owens Breast Center.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and this is the second year that AdventHealth Gordon hosted community members to light the hospital's tower pink.

Emily Tarpley, Operation Manager of Oncology Services at AdventHealth Gordon, began the ceremony sharing the importance of AdventHealth Gordon's cancer program to the community.

"We are honored and grateful you have joined us tonight as we shine the light on breast cancer awareness," said Tarpley. "Many of you have joined us by lighting your own homes and porches pink throughout our community. Thank you for standing with us and partnering in this important cause."

"When it comes to breast cancer, everyone knows someone who has fought the disease or is currently fighting it. More importantly, everyone loves someone who has faced that journey," said Tarpley. "Tonight we honor survivors, remembering those we have lost and standing alongside those who continue to fight."

Tarpley said that AdventHealth Gordon has a longstanding tradition of providing comprehensive cancer care while emphasizing prevention and early detection.

"We are proud that both AdventHealth Gordon and AdventHealth Murray have both been recognized by the American College of Radiology as Designated Comprehensive Breast Imaging Centers," said Tarpley. "Here at the Edna Owens Breast Center, we offer 3D mammography, breast ultrasound, breast MRI, same day breast biopsies, genetic testing, bone density scans and breast Nurse Navigator services."

The results of a mammography are available in a timely manner.

"Patients receive mammography results within 24 to 48 hours, and results are also available through our patient portal," said Tarpley. "Beyond diagnosis and treatment, we provide support groups, the Beautiful You program and many other services focused on whole person care, because when it comes to fighting cancer, it takes an army."

Tarpley thanked the Northwest Georgia Cancer Coalition for providing educational signage along the hospital's walking trail and throughout the community.

"These efforts help educate women about the life-saving importance of screening mammography and early detection," said Tarpley. "Throughout October, our Cancer Care teams and Community Outreach teams will be actively engaged across Northwest Georgia through health fairs, presentations, educational programs and community events focused on raising awareness."

For close to two decades, AdventHealth Gordon has provided first class cancer care to the

community.

"Cancer care at AdventHealth Gordon began more than 15 years ago through the vision and dedication of long-time community member Helen Jones, who established the program in honor of her late husband, Howard Jones," said Tarpley. "The Edna Owens Breast Center itself was made possible by the late George and Edna Owens and the AdventHealth Gordon Foundation. George Owens wanted to leave a legacy and make a lasting difference in our community. Because of that vision, lives continue to be changed everyday. Over the past seven years, we have performed nearly 35,000 mammograms, and more than 2,000 genetic screenings. Those numbers represent much more than statistics; they represent more cancers detected, more lives saved, more mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, friends and neighbors receiving timely treatment, more families staying together and a stronger, healthier community."

Justin Birmele, president and CEO of AdventHealth Gordon, said that the fight against breast cancer is a personal one for him.

"It was exactly eight years ago this past week that my mother was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer," said Birmele. "I remember that (call) because two weeks from that date, my daughter was due to be born. I remember clearly, that night, as my world was also growing, my world was also collapsing at the same time. Fast forward to today, and she is a breast cancer survivor (after) nearly two years of treatments (with) the best doctors, best care. When my family moved here a year ago, I remember driving around the neighborhoods and seeing the pink on porches that were lit up and the government buildings that were lit up. It meant so much to me. (My mom) came to visit and I remember the (emotion) as we recognized a community that stood for breast cancer awareness. So tonight, we honor those who have not just fought breast cancer, but those that are fighting it today and the families that are walking alongside those who are fighting. We also recognize our outstanding Breast Center, world class, and all our cancer care teams who not only provide excellent clinical care but compassionate, whole person care."

Birmele also stressed the importance of early detection, saying that, "When a woman, a mother, a daughter is saved, a family is strengthened, and when a family is strengthened, the whole community is better because of it."

AdventHealth Gordon reminds the public that about 1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer during their lifetime, and more than 4 million women in the United States are living with a history of breast cancer.

As pink lights shine across our community this October, AdventHealth Gordon hopes they serve as a reminder to care for your health, encourage the women you love to stay up to date with recommended mammograms and screenings and keep patients, survivors, families and caregivers in your prayers.



Rally Against Cancer Pickleball Tournament Brings Community Together to Support Cancer Awareness

ADVENTHEALTH GORDON

Community members, pickleball enthusiasts and supporters recently gathered for the Rally Against Cancer Pickleball Tournament on September 27, a community event dedicated to raising awareness and support in the fight against cancer.

The event welcomed participants of all skill levels for a day of friendly competition, fellowship and community engagement. More than a sporting event, Rally Against Cancer served as an opportunity to bring people together around a shared commitment to

supporting individuals and families impacted by cancer.

Throughout the day, players took to the courts while spectators, volunteers and supporters helped create an atmosphere of encouragement and hope. The event highlighted the power of community connections and the importance of raising awareness about cancer prevention, treatment and survivorship.

"Events like Rally Against Cancer remind us of the strength that comes from a community coming together for a common purpose," said Emily Tarpley, manager of the Edna Owens Breast Center

at AdventHealth Gordon. "We are grateful for everyone who participated, volunteered and supported this event to help raise awareness and encourage hope for those affected by cancer."

The event also provided an opportunity to celebrate survivors, honor those currently undergoing treatment and recognize loved ones whose lives have been touched by cancer. AdventHealth remains committed to providing compassionate, whole-person cancer care that addresses the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their families.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month: ACS Survey Reveals Significant Gaps Between Awareness and Action

Understanding what affects breast cancer risk can empower women to take charge of their health with everyday choices that help reduce risk

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

The American Cancer Society today released the findings of a survey of approximately 33,000 U.S. women, assessing awareness of modifiable breast cancer risk factors and whether women are meeting American Cancer Society recommendations for risk reduction and prevention. The survey found risk-factor awareness is generally high but that significant gaps exist between awareness and taking positive action to lower risk.

Some breast cancer risk factors are within our influence, and awareness can be a powerful starting point for action. In fact, it's estimated that more than 30% of breast cancers are considered preventable through healthy behaviors that can reduce risk, including exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy weight, avoiding alcohol and tobacco, and breastfeeding.

"Knowing your risk factors isn't the same as acting on them, and this gap is the real story here," said Alpa V. Patel, PhD, senior vice president of population science at the American Cancer Society. "It's not enough to raise awareness — we have to understand whether awareness translates into action, and how we can help women close the distance."

The survey's key findings include: Women already know what they can't control. 99% are aware that a family history of cancer raises risk, but it's also important to know that family history alone doesn't predict most breast cancer cases. More than 85% of women diagnosed with breast cancer have no family history of the disease.

Physical activity shows the widest gap. 91% of women know that low activity levels raise cancer risk, yet only 27% meet the American Cancer

Society's recommended 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity (or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity) each week.

Alcohol shows the second-largest gap. 85% of women know that alcohol use raises risk, but 69% report drinking to some extent.

Breastfeeding (for women who have children and can breastfeed) is the least-known protective factor. Only 55% of women know that breastfeeding can help lower cancer risk.

In addition to a family history of breast cancer, other risk factors that you cannot change include being born female, age (most breast cancers are found in women aged 55 and older), race and ethnicity, inherited genetic changes, dense breast tissue, and prior radiation to the chest area.

The American Cancer Society encourages women to take the [ACS CancerRisk360™](#) free assessment to learn more about the factors they can change to improve their health and lower their cancer risk.

The survey highlights substantial opportunities to improve awareness of modifiable risk factors for breast cancer and to encourage women to make informed choices that can lower their risk. These findings can strengthen public health awareness efforts as well as guide conversations between healthcare providers and their patients. The survey results also highlight the importance of initiatives to expand access to safe, walkable communities and affordable, healthy food.

The 33,000 survey respondents were drawn from the American Cancer Society's Cancer Prevention Study-3 (CPS-3), a large, geographically and racially/ethnically diverse sample of 300,000 participants who were cancer free when they enrolled between 2006 and 2013 and who continue to be studied. Likely



because of respondents' long-term engagement with cancer research, their awareness levels for cancer risk factors are significantly higher than those demonstrated by the general population in previous studies.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the U.S. after skin cancers, accounting for about 1 in 3 new cancer cases in women each year. About 1 in 8 women in the U.S. will develop breast cancer during their lifetime, and the incidence rate is rising 1% per year overall and at a faster rate (1.4%) for women aged under 50. In 2026, an estimated 321,910 new cases of invasive female breast cancer will be diagnosed in the U.S. and 42,140 women will die from the disease. In the same period, an estimated 2,670 men will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer and 530 men will die from the disease.

Read the full survey report, "From

Awareness to Action: A New Look at Breast Cancer Risk Reduction," [here](#).

About the American Cancer Society

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 110 years, we have been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. We are committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To learn more, visit [cancer.org](#) or call our helpline at 1-800-227-2345. Connect with us on Facebook, X, and Instagram.

For further information: American Cancer Society, [Darrya.Lipscomb@cancer.org](#); [Anne.Doerr@cancer.org](#)



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Peeples Cancer Institute debuts new mobile mammography unit, Mammography on the go

Brandi Owczarz
staff@gordongazettega.com

In mid-July 2026, Hamilton's Peeples Cancer Institute (PCI) publicly unveiled their new mobile mammography unit, Mammography on the go, on their campus in Dalton. The event allowed the public to meet members of the PCI team that will be operating the unit and to tour the interior of the unit.

With one in eight women facing a diagnosis of breast cancer, early detection is key and often times, women do not get their mammograms regularly due to a variety of reasons of inconvenience. The goal of Mammography on the go is to make preventative care more convenient and accessible, designed to bring the highest quality breast screening directly to residents of Northwest Georgia.

"This moment represents more than the arrival of a vehicle or a piece of equipment. It represents hope, access and a stronger commitment to help the people we serve," said Sandy McKenzie, president and CEO, Hamilton Medical Center. "Today is a celebration, but it is also a call to purpose. We are here because too many people still face unnecessary barriers when it comes to life-saving breast cancer screening. This unit helps us meet patients where they are, and that is exactly the kind of healthcare our community deserves. This unit is designed to remove the obstacles that keep people from being screened on time, it brings advanced-imaging technology to patients who may not be able to travel long distances or wait weeks for an appointment, it offers convenience without compromising quality and it creates a more welcoming path to preventative care. That matters, because early detection can change everything. A screening completed today may lead to a diagnosis at a stage where treatment is more effective, recovery is more likely and a life can be saved. At Hamilton, we believe that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. That belief guides how we plan, how we invest and how we serve.

"The mobile mammography unit is one more expression of our broader commitment to removing barriers to care and making prevention more accessible for every member of our community," said McKenzie. "We know that access must be intentional, and we are committed to building systems that meet patients with compassion and convenience. Our vision is straightforward and ambitious: to expand access, improve outcomes and make high-quality care available closer to home. We want every patient to know that they matter, their health matters and their time matters. By continuing to invest in innovative community-based care, we

strengthen trust and improve lives in ways that are both immediate and lasting. This is the future we are working forward together."

Allyson Coker, the executive director of the Whitfield Healthcare Foundation, said the mobile mammography center represented a tremendous investment in the health of the community.

"While Hamilton Medical Center and Peeples Cancer Institute are responsible for delivering the care today, I have the privilege of recognizing those who made this possible," said Coker. "At the Whitfield Healthcare Foundation, we believe that philanthropy is an investment in the people of our community, specifically their long-term health and well-being. The women who step onto this unit in the days and years ahead will likely never know the names of the individuals, families and foundations that made it possible; they won't know the planning, fundraising and conversations that happened behind the scenes, but they will know that someone cared enough to ensure that they had access to their screening."

Coker then recognized, and expressed gratitude, to every donor who contributed to the project, giving special recognition to those whose leadership gifts brought the vision to reality, beginning with The Peeples Family Foundation, which led the campaign by committing to match every dollar raised up to \$1 million dollars. She said that they are well on their way to the \$1 million dollar goal, raising more than \$600,000 to date.

"Their generosity helped make this unit a reality, and the matching gifts will help sustain the program for many years to come," said Coker.

She also recognized The Brown Whitworth Reynolds Foundation and The Frank P. Pierce Foundation.

Hamilton Ambassadors, employees who had payroll deductions to support the project, were also recognized, as well as Signature Flooring, who provided the pink carpets that will welcome patients into the mobile unit.

Coker also thanked the Board members of the Whitfield Healthcare Foundation.

"Thank you to every donor for believing in this project and for investing in the health of the communities we serve," said Coker. "Your generosity will travel thousands of miles over the life of this unit; it will reach women who postponed a screening because of work schedules, transportation challenges, that we know are very real in our community, and countless other day-to-day daily life. It will bring peace to many, and undoubtedly, life-saving early detection to others."

Coker said that the life-saving early detection part of the unit is very personal to her, as she was diagnosed



with Stage 0 breast cancer in late 2023.

"It was detected very early through an annual screening mammogram," said Coker. "Because it was found early, my treatment was routine and I was blessed to receive care at Hamilton Medical Center and Peeples Cancer Institute five minute from my home or my office. Due to its highly invasive grade, had it not been detected through that annual screening, the outcome could have been very different the following year. Every woman who steps onto this unit deserves the same opportunity I had: the opportunity for early detection, for early intervention and the best possible outcome. Today we celebrate a vehicle, but what we're really celebrating is opportunity: opportunity for

earlier detection, opportunity for better outcomes, opportunity for more birthdays, anniversaries, family gatherings and precious moments with those we love."

Alan Peeples, with The Peeples Family Foundations, said the day was especially meaningful for the family.

"My parents always had a strong belief in caring for our neighbors and investing in the future," said Peeples. "How exciting for us that the mission of PCI can now be carried beyond these walls. I want to thank our Hamilton Medical Center, our Peeples Cancer Institute leadership and our wonderful Whitfield Healthcare Foundation for their unwavering commitment to this important investment. Our family is honored to support this initiative and to

continue our parents' legacy. We hope this inspires others to join us to ensure that every person in Northwest Georgia has access to the highest level of care here at Hamilton Medical Center and Peeples Cancer Institute."

The unit hit the road all across Northwest Georgia in August.

Regular mammograms are one of the most important tools for early detection and can help identify breast cancer early when treatment is often most effective.

To schedule a screening at a Mammography on the go screening event, call 706.281.8309 or email MobileMammoScheduling@vhcs.org. To schedule a screening at Peeples Cancer Institute, located at 1215 Memorial Drive in Dalton, call 706-272-6565.



Every Journey Matters

Battling breast cancer in a small town

HAMILTON-VITRUVIAN HEALTH

Susan Lucas, pictured, grew up on Long Island with the kind of assuredness that comes from knowing you live in a part of the country that is home to some of the most advanced medical care in the world.

When she met her husband, a Northwest Georgia native who temporarily lived in New York, and they decided to move to Chatsworth, it was her turn to walk through a major life change. What she did not expect was the cascade of medical events that would follow.

First, she had a hysterectomy. Then, during a routine breast exam, her doctor found a lump in her breast and sent her for testing. By March, Lucas had been diagnosed with breast cancer and had started six months of chemo treatment. She went on to have a lumpectomy in September and is now on her cancer-free journey.

Toward the beginning of her treatment, Lucas had three months of treatment that is sometimes known for its aggressiveness and potential challenging side effects. Lucas said she was pleasantly surprised that the treatment was not as severe as she initially expected. Her digestive issues were minimal, her fatigue was manageable, and none of the more bizarre side effects she had heard about happened.

"I heard a lot of horror stories going into this, and I was obviously scared," she said. "But walking into Peeples Cancer Institute changed my whole perspective of cancer. I was super nervous about being down here in a small town with this diagnosis. I'm from New York, and we have the best of the best healthcare up there, so I was nervous, but the minute I walked into Peeples, all that worry went away."

Peeples Cancer Institute at Hamilton Medical Center participates in national Phase III clinical trials with National Cancer Institute-designated Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University and is the only ACR-accredited oncology radiation facility within 50 miles of Chattanooga. Board-certified medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and skilled support staff provide treatment and support services.

Lucas said she was pleased with the professional care and treatment she received. She said she was very appreciative of her oncologist, Lisa

Duhaime, MD, along with the nurses and entire staff who helped her feel that she mattered as a person and not only as a patient.

"They were so incredible and kind. They totally got me through this," Lucas said. "I was so grateful I was here and not in New York."

Lucas said she wants people to know cancer treatment is not always bad. "You can get through it," she said.

Now, Lucas is passionate about encouraging others to get their mammograms on schedule. She's also enjoying living her life, with multiple children and grandchildren in the family. She is preparing for her daughter's upcoming fall wedding while continuing to work as a showroom manager for a Christmas wholesaler in Atlanta. She was able to work through most of her treatment, only taking days off for infusions and recovery.

About one in eight women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetimes. When caught early, the five-year relative survival rate is over 99 percent. Lucas said she had no previous health history that would have raised alarms and no breast cancer history in her family.

About Peeples Cancer Institute
Accredited by the American College of Surgeons - Commission on Cancer, the 46,000-square-foot Peeples Cancer Institute (PCI) at Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) centralizes patient-centered care and outpatient cancer services in one convenient location, allowing for HMC's expert team of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and clinical support staff to work collaboratively to provide state-of-the-art care in a healing, nurturing environment.

PCI includes: board-certified medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and radiologists; state-of-the-art radiation therapies, including the Varian® TrueBeam linear accelerator and 4D CT Simulator; customized treatment plans; genetic testing and counseling; 3D mammography and ultrasound imaging (with expanded evening options for mammography); private and semi-private infusion rooms; medical nutrition by a registered dietician; a bistro with Starbucks coffee, smoothies and light



refreshments; and patient navigation and oncology social work services.

About Hamilton Medical Center
The flagship affiliate for Vitruvian Health's Northwest Georgia region, Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) is a 255-bed regional acute-care hospital that offers major medical, surgical and diagnostic services, including accredited stroke and chest pain centers. Advanced technology and wellness are two significant areas of focus for HMC. Services include the freestanding Hamilton Ambulatory Surgery Center, Hamilton Diagnostics Center, and Bradley Wellness Center, as well as a Level II trauma center, Peeples Cancer Institute, Heart & Vascular program (including open heart surgery), Hamilton Spine Health and Sport, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and more.

About Vitruvian Health
Vitruvian Health, formerly Hamilton Health Care System, is a not-for-profit, fully integrated health system

serving the Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee regions. Vitruvian includes Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, Ga., and Bradley Medical Center in Cleveland, Tenn., affiliated physician practices, walk-in care centers, retirement and skilled nursing centers, a diagnostic center, a cancer institute, an institute for children with developmental delays, and more. Known for its advanced care and personalized service, Vitruvian Health offers innovative treatment options in state-of-the-art facilities while maintaining a compassionate, friendly and tranquil healing environment.

The Vitruvian name draws from the organization's recognizable da Vinci-inspired Vitruvian Man icon, which has been a prominent part of Hamilton's logo since 1976. Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man represents harmony, balance, and the interconnectedness of all aspects of health, perfectly aligning with Hamilton's integrated system of care.

Why breast density matters for screening

HAMILTON - VITRUVIAN HEALTH

If your mammogram revealed that you have dense breasts, you might be wondering what that means for you. Here are answers to some common questions, based on information from the American Cancer Society (ACS), the National Cancer Institute and other experts.

What are dense breasts?

Breasts are made up of three different kinds of tissue: fibrous, glandular and fatty. When seen

on a mammogram, fibrous and glandular tissues look denser than fatty tissue. If your breasts have more of these two types of tissue than fatty tissue, then you have dense breasts.

You can't feel whether you have dense breasts. The doctor who reads your mammogram determines this. If the doctor sees that you have dense breasts, they will note it in the mammogram report.

Why is breast density important?

Dense breasts are common—almost half of

women 40 and older who get mammograms have them. They are not abnormal, and they don't cause disease. But they do make it harder for a radiologist to find signs of cancer on a mammogram. Dense breast tissue and abnormal breast changes, such as lumps, both appear white on a mammogram.

And, according to the ACS, women with dense breasts have a higher risk of breast cancer than women who don't have dense breast tissue. Researchers don't yet understand why this is so.

What does having

dense breasts mean for me?

The first step: Talk to your doctor about breast density and your overall breast cancer risk. Each person's health situation is different. Your doctor is the best person to assess your risk based on your personal and family history.

You and your doctor can decide if you might need to change your breast cancer screening routine. Depending on your needs, your doctor might recommend:

- 3D mammography. This type of mammogram provides

images of the breast in several "slices" from different angles. It can make some abnormal changes easier to spot.

- Breast ultrasound. This machine uses sound waves to make pictures of breast tissue.

- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). MRI uses a magnet connected to a computer to make detailed pictures of the breast.

However, both ultrasound and MRI can find things that are not cancer. These findings might lead to more follow-up testing. Ask your doctor about the risks and benefits.

Exercise During Breast Cancer Treatment: It's a healthy choice

HAMILTON - VITRUVIAN HEALTH

The benefits of exercise don't stop after a breast cancer diagnosis. In fact, physical activity, even during treatment, is a great way to improve strength and fitness and maintain your quality of life.

You might think a breast cancer diagnosis would be a pretty clear signal to slow down and conserve your strength for the journey ahead. But, in most cases, experts say just the opposite is true.

Exercise can be one of the healthiest things a woman with breast cancer can do, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS).

Exercise can help reduce stress and anxiety, increase self-esteem, and lower the risk of depression. Some research shows physical activity can improve survival rates and reduce the risk of breast cancer recurrence. Exercise can

also help women:

- Increase cardiovascular fitness.
- Build muscle strength.
- Overcome fatigue.
- Help with weight control.
- Weight control may be especially important for women who have breast cancer, since treatment can cause a significant amount of weight gain or loss.

Physical activity, along with a proper diet, is a great way to take off pounds if you need to.

Getting started

If you'd like to start an exercise program, talk to your doctor first. They may suggest working with a physical therapist or another expert familiar with people affected by cancer. The right exercise program will take into account the cancer treatments you're receiving and your current levels of stamina, strength and fitness.

The ACS recommends that adults with stable disease get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity each week, preferably spread throughout the week. A brisk walk is considered moderate exercise. So is leisurely bicycling, skating, golfing and doubles tennis.

Strength training is also important on at least two days per week.

Staying safe

Whether you're in treatment or finished with chemotherapy and radiation, you should probably start and continue to go slow with exercise. There also could be some additional limitations. According to the ACS:

- You may not be able to exercise if you have severe anemia. Talk to your doctor about which physical activities may be right for you. You may need to wait to exercise until your red blood cell

count is back to normal.

- If your immune system is weakened, avoid public gyms and other places where you may be more likely to encounter germs.
- To avoid infection, don't swim if you have a catheter. Also, chlorine in a swimming pool may irritate skin exposed to radiation treatment.
- If your treatment causes numbness in your feet or balance problems, take steps to reduce your risk of falls while exercising—by using a recumbent bicycle instead of a treadmill, for example.

Many women find that breast cancer treatments take a lot out of them. It's normal to expect that, on some days, exercise will be the last thing on your mind. But regular exercise is a good way to overcome fatigue.

Overall, the goal is to stay as active as you can. It's good for both your emotional and physical health.

Atrium Health Floyd's annual Paper Doll Parade and Breast Cancer Awareness 5K raises funds to support accessible, affordable screenings

ATRIUM HEALTH FLOYD

Nearly 500 runners came together at Ridge Ferry Park for this year's Paper Doll Parade and Breast Cancer Awareness 5K, showing their support for breast cancer patients, survivors and families throughout our community.

From the costume contest to the survivor celebration and

remembrance ceremony, the day was filled with hope, strength and connection.

Funds raised through the event will support mammography scholarships, helping make breast cancer screenings more accessible and affordable for those who need them most.

Thank you to every runner, volunteer and community organization

that continues to make this tradition so meaningful. Together, we're helping bring compassionate cancer care to our neighbors.

Together, Atrium Health Floyd's Breast Center and Harbin Clinic Cancer Center are helping provide compassionate cancer care, lifesaving screenings and support for patients and families in our community.



Atrium Health Floyd and Harbin Clinic to Unveil New Faces of Hope Portraits and Stories

ATRIUM HEALTH FLOYD

For 10 years, Miriam Little helped connect cancer patients to the resources they needed on their cancer journey. She had never had cancer herself, but her experience in social work gave her the tools to help those who had. That all changed in 2023, when Miriam learned she had ovarian cancer.

Now, Little, an oncology social worker, is one of 14 new Faces of Hope portraits and stories on display at the Harbin Clinic Cancer Center.

The exhibit features black and white portraits photographed by Rome-area photographer Kelly Moore. Each portrait is accompanied by a brief synopsis of the patient's Here for the When cancer journey. In addition to Little, other individuals featured in the exhibit include Holly Avidan, Bonnie Clark, Ben Cohely, Jacob Cohely, Sarah Emmer, Garry Fisher, Randy Grogan, Tara Hartline, Debbie Hayes, Tammie McConnell, Reggie Nichols, Lauren Simpson and Carol Yagadics.

"I really feel like I can connect with the patients who are going through a similar journey.

The Faces of Hope portraits and stories are exhibited on the walls of the first and second floor of the Harbin Clinic Cancer Center, 255 W. Fifth St., in Rome. This is the third iteration of the Faces of Hope gallery.

"Every patient is special and every cancer journey is unique to the person, and that is why the Faces of Hope are so valuable," said Dr. Melissa Dillmon, Harbin Clinic oncologist. "When a patient or a patient family comes to the cancer center, they will see the photos and read the stories of patients who have been in their shoes. Some of these patients are still undergoing treatment. So, these aren't surviving stories. They are thriving stories, and each of them is beautiful, complex and, yes, inspiring."

Harbin Clinic and Atrium Health Floyd have been a beacon of support and strength for cancer patients and their families in Rome and northwest Georgia for decades. Now working together as one team, these experts provide comprehensive cancer care for their patients and families offering a range of services from prevention and detection to treatment and support through complementary, integrative therapies. For 10 years, Miriam Little helped connect cancer patients to the resources they needed on their cancer journey. She had never had cancer herself, but her experience in social work gave her the tools to help those who had. That all changed in 2023, when Miriam learned she had ovarian cancer.



Avidan, Bonnie Clark, Ben Cohely, Jacob Cohely, Sarah Emmer, Garry Fisher, Randy Grogan, Tara Hartline, Debbie Hayes, Tammie McConnell, Reggie Nichols, Lauren Simpson and Carol Yagadics.

"These photographs and stories beautifully capture the heart, hope and care of the cancer experience from the patient's point of view," said Aimee Griffin, vice president of professional services. "From a 22-year-old new mom to a retired gentleman who plans to travel to see more of the world, these are among the many patients who have benefitted from the expert, compassionate care provided by Atrium Health Floyd and Harbin Clinic."

Having cancer, Little said, has made her a better social worker.

"Before, I had the skills as a social worker to gather resources and give my patients emotional and spiritual support. But it is totally different when you go through a situation. It's not just on paper. It really did change my perspective and my role as their social worker. Now, I share my experience and tell my patients the things they can expect. I can connect with them like never before," she said. "I really feel like I can connect with the patients who are going through a

similar journey.

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Every Journey Matters

Floyd County woman celebrates remission, is one of the Faces of Hope cancer warrior stories celebrated at Harbin Clinic Cancer Center

ATRIUM HEALTH FLOYD

For more than 30 years, Bonnie poured her heart into generations of students at Pepperell Elementary School. When she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2024, the beloved teacher found herself on the receiving end of the same love, encouragement and support she had given to others.

Bonnie and her physician had been monitoring a spot in her breast for several months. On July 11, 2024, she went to The Breast Center for a routine screening mammogram. Thanks to the Center's Know in 24 commitment, Bonnie had results within 24 hours. On July 12 she was back at The Breast Center for a diagnostic mammogram. Her radiologist was concerned about the spot he had been watching. A same-day biopsy revealed Bonnie had aggressive, triple-negative breast cancer.

Four days later, she was meeting with Dr. Paul Brock Sr., Harbin Clinic surgeon. Bonnie would need

chemotherapy, surgery, radiation and immunotherapy.

Through it all, she never walked alone.

Her school community stepped up with prayers, meals, gift cards and support. Her church wrapped its arms around her family. Her care team at Atrium Health Floyd and Harbin Clinic worked quickly to guide her through every step of treatment, helping replace fear with confidence and hope.

Today, Bonnie is celebrating remission. Her story is one 20 Faces of Hope cancer warrior stories on display at the Harbin Clinic Cancer Center.

Her story is a powerful reminder that routine screenings matter, early detection saves lives and a caring community can make all the difference during life's toughest moments.

As Bonnie looks back on her journey, what stays with her most isn't just the treatment she received. It's the people who stood with her through it all.



"I can't thank all the people who walked alongside me enough: my school, my church, The Breast Center and the Cancer Center," Bonnie said. "This is an incredible community to be a part of."

Read Bonnie's inspiring story of resilience, faith, community and

hope.

From early detection through survivorship, we're honored to walk alongside patients like Bonnie. Learn more about the cancer care available through Atrium Health Floyd and Harbin Clinic.

Susan G. Komen® Launches new Breast Honesty™ Platform to Confront the Urgent Realities of Breast Cancer and Challenges us to do Better

SUSAN G. KOMEN FOUNDATION

Susan G. Komen®, the world’s leading nonprofit breast cancer organization, has recently launched “Don’t Fail the Girls,” a new national campaign calling on the public to make ending deaths from breast cancer urgent for a new generation. The campaign is built on Komen’s Breast Honesty™ platform, which empowers people to have open, honest conversations about breast health, understand their personal risk and push for timely, high-quality care for everyone.

“Breast cancer is not over. It is pervasive and this year will be responsible for nearly 43,000 deaths in the U.S. We’re losing someone’s mother, daughter, sister, father, friend or colleague — someone you know and love,” said Amber Guild, CEO of Susan G. Komen. “That is the urgency of this moment — and it underscores the importance of the work that remains to be done. We still see people diagnosed too young, too late or without access to the high-quality care they need and deserve. And we still have unacceptable disparities in who survives. ‘Don’t Fail the Girls’ is our call to make these truths impossible to ignore, and to bring new urgency to the fight to create a future where no one dies from breast cancer.”

Despite decades of progress, breast cancer remains one of the nation’s most urgent health challenges and shows no signs of stopping. Nearly 325,000 women and men in the U.S. are expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and about every 12 minutes, someone will die from breast cancer.

The disease knows no bounds, whether it be age, gender, race or geography. It is rising faster among women under 50 than over 50 in the U.S., including many who believe they are too young to be at risk. Black women in the U.S. continue to face delays in diagnosis, inequitable access to care and differences in treatment, and higher incidence of

aggressive types of breast cancer, among other factors, making them on average about 40% more likely to die from breast cancer than white women. This means that in some communities the mortality rate is even higher. Metastatic breast cancer (MBC), also known as stage 4 breast cancer, is the most advanced stage of the disease and is responsible for nearly all breast cancer deaths. An estimated 170,000 people in the U.S. are living with metastatic breast cancer.

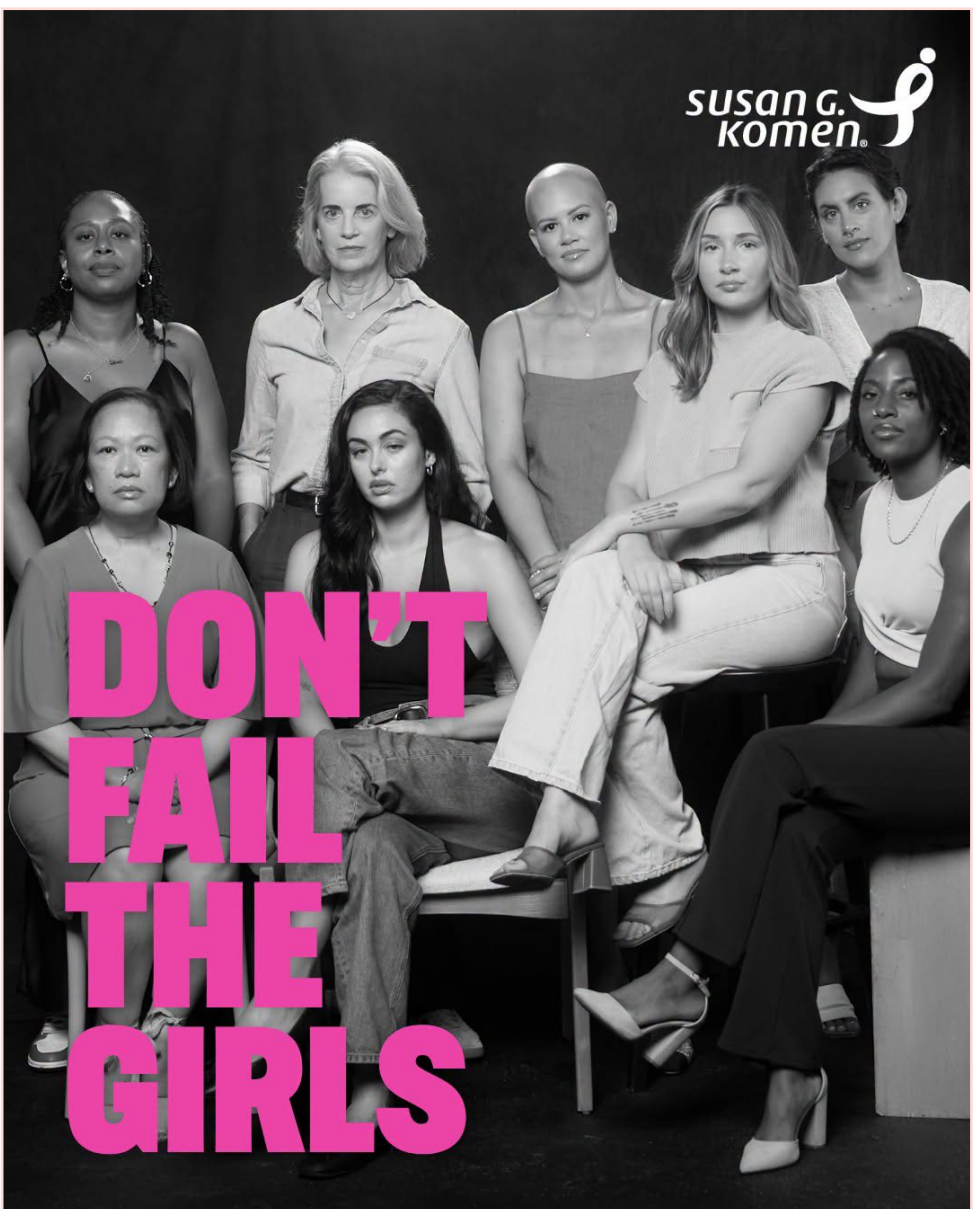
The “Don’t Fail the Girls” campaign, a charge to all to stand with those facing breast cancer now, and do better for everyone who may face it next, comes to life through three key campaign elements:

“Don’t Fail the Girls” PSA and Creative — A film built on the real voices of women touched by breast cancer — newly diagnosed, in treatment, those living with MBC, survivors, those at high risk and the families who stand beside them — each naming the age at which they were diagnosed, underscoring that breast cancer affects people at every age.

The Komen Giving Tee™ — Created with Harlem’s Fashion Row and designer Stella Jean, the first T-shirt embedded with NFC technology to fund women’s health. A tap of the sleeve lets anyone donate directly to Susan G. Komen, on the street, at work or wherever they are. The limited-edition shirt debuted during New York Fashion Week and is now available here.

The Breast Bank™ — Starting today, anyone can make a deposit in the Breast Bank to support the Komen Patient Care Center. The Breast Bank™ makes it easy to help someone else access and afford whatever comes next — a ride to treatment, a week of groceries, the follow-up tests and care they need — because no one should have to choose between paying their bills and protecting their health.

Since its founding in 1982, Komen has invested more than \$1.1 billion in breast cancer research and is the



largest nonprofit funder of breast cancer research after the U.S. government and has contributed to nearly 4,300 scientific discoveries and played a role in 31 of the 32 FDA-approved breast cancer drugs developed over the past three decades. These breakthroughs are giving people with early stage and metastatic breast cancers more time, more options and more hope. Komen has also invested approximately \$2.7 billion in patient support and advocacy programs worldwide, helping millions of people access high-quality care. But despite this progress, breast cancer remains one of the nation’s most urgent health challenges.

Progress alone isn’t enough when families continue to lose loved ones every day — we have to move faster and turn what we’ve learned into more lives saved.

Every person who donates, volunteers, registers for an event or joins the conversation helps fund groundbreaking research, supports people impacted by breast cancer today and fuels advocacy that improves access to high-quality care. To join the movement, donate or connect with a patient navigator through Komen’s Patient Care Center, visit [Komen.org](https://www.komen.org) or call 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636).

5 WAYS TO SUPPORT KOMEN’S MISSION



Become an
**Advocacy
Insider**



Make a purchase
through
**Shop for the
Cure**



Register for a
**Race, Walk or
3-Day event**



Start a Facebook
or Instagram
fundraiser



**Volunteer
in your
community**

 LIGHT YOUR PORCH **PINK**

Together, we shine a light on healing.



Join AdventHealth throughout the month of October as we honor those in our community affected by breast cancer.

To help catch cancer early, we make it easy to get screened with 3D mammograms in 30 minutes.



Find Pink Porch bulb pick-up locations at **PinkPorchGA.com**.
Share your porch using **#PinkPorchGA**