Breast cancer risk factors include:

- Being female.
- Increasing age. Women older than 50 have a greater risk.
- A personal history. If you’ve had breast cancer in one breast, you have an increased risk of developing cancer in the other breast.
- A family history. If you have a mother, sister, or daughter with breast cancer, you have a greater chance of being diagnosed.
- Genetic mutations. The most common gene mutations are referred to as BRCA1 and BRCA2. These genes can greatly increase your risk of breast cancer and other cancers, but they don’t make cancer inevitable.
- Radiation exposure. If you received radiation treatments to your chest as a child or young adult, you’re more likely to develop breast cancer later in life.
- Obesity.
- Beginning your period before age 12.
- Beginning menopause after age 55.
- Having your first child after age 35.
- Postmenopausal hormone therapy (Medications that combine estrogen and progesterone).
- Drinking alcohol. Excessive consumption of alcohol can increase the risk of breast cancer.

The Parkwest Comprehensive Breast Center provides a single-setting for medical expertise, education, individualized treatment planning, and ongoing support for breast healthcare. The center is an accredited American College of Radiology Breast Center of Excellence. As a patient, this accreditation means:

- The Parkwest Comprehensive Breast Center has voluntarily undergone a rigorous review process to ensure its services meet nationally accepted standards.
- Physicians have the education and certification to perform and interpret ultrasound and mammography, stereotactic breast biopsy, breast ultrasound and ultrasound-guided breast biopsy.

Maggie Watkins has had annual mammograms for more than 20 years. She knew it was necessary for her to be very diligent about screenings because her mother and mother’s sister both had breast cancer, but Maggie never had an abnormal result until this past June. “I went for my routine mammogram on May 5,” Watkins said. “It showed some changes from last year, so they brought me back about a day later for a follow-up. That screening showed some architectural spots, but they looked like just calcifications. A breast biopsy was scheduled for June 6 just to make sure.”

Watkins had a trip planned to attend a nursing conference May 7-12 as part of a recent honor she had received at work, the Parkwest Clinical Excellence Award for the Endoscopy Department. There are two reasons she had received the spot: she didn’t look like cancerous tumors on the mammogram, she was permitted to travel, so she did. “There’s a day after the biopsy,” Watkins got the dreaded news: she had cancer. Since that time, her life has become a whirlwind of genetic testing, various scans and chemotherapy. Despite it all, Maggie has a positive outlook.

“Everyone at Parkwest has been so supportive,” said Maggie. “My manager allows me to work around my treatments and my co-workers have organized the walk team and even made me some sister to sister. Since I’ve lost my hair, I couldn’t ask for a better group of people. It’s made my journey so much easier.”

“The way I look at it, the stiffer I feel, the more the medicines are working to kill the cancer,” she said.

To celebrate the completion of her treatments, she and several co-workers from Parkwest are participating as “ TEAM Maggie” in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on Oct. 27.

“Thank you because I know it means a lot to get the best film possible in order to know what’s going on. Your importance in the path of a woman’s health is important in everyone’s busy life, we plan a time to come in, praying for our family and friends. It’s very important to me. It’s a gift from my husband, my kids, my co-workers, and my family. I say ‘keep up the awesome service!’”

“I’ve Lost My Hair, Not My Hope”

October 1, 2012

Comments About Really Excellent Service

Louise Snodgrass

“I had my annual mammogram, this is my second time visiting your Breast Center for a few years now and have always had a good experience, in everyone’s busy life, we plan a time to come in, praying for our family and friends.”

Related News Article

Routine screening allowed early detection for woman with known breast cancer risk factors

Just the (breast cancer) facts, ma’am

What is breast cancer? Breast cancer forms in the cells of the breasts. Of the numerous types of breast cancer, ductal carcinoma in situ (cells that grow in the milk duct) is the most common. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosed in America, affecting 1 in 3 women. Only skin cancer is more prevalent. Women are more likely to have breast cancer, but men can get it too.

What are the signs and symptoms? When the cancer tumor is small, there may be no symptoms. That’s why it is important for women to undergo recommended screening guidelines, such as monthly breast self-exams and an annual mammogram. Signs and symptoms of advancing breast cancer may include:

- A breast lump or thickening that feels different from surrounding tissue.
- Bloody discharge from the nipple.
- Change in the size or shape of a breast.
- Changes to the skin over the breast, such as dimpling, redness or pitting (like the skin of an orange).
- Inverted nipple.
- Peeling, scaling or puckering of the nipple or breast skin.

When should I see my doctor? See your doctor if you find a lump or any other change in your breast—even if you’ve just had a mammogram with normal results.

What are the risk factors? Breast cancer risk factors include:

- A personal history of breast cancer.
-绝经年龄早于50岁。
- 环境因素。如果你的妈妈、妹妹或女儿有乳腺癌，你有更高的患癌风险。
- 家族遗传。如BRCA1和BRCA2等基因突变。

The Parkwest Comprehensive Breast Center is ACR Accredited

What does this mean to you?

The Parkwest Comprehensive Breast Center provides a single-setting for medical expertise, education, individualized treatment planning, and ongoing support for breast healthcare. The center is an accredited American College of Radiology Breast Center of Excellence. As a patient, this accreditation means:

- The Parkwest Comprehensive Breast Center has voluntarily undergone a rigorous review process to ensure its services meet nationally accepted standards.
- Physicians have the education and certification to perform and interpret medical images.
- Parkwest has demonstrated excellence in breast imaging by obtaining accreditation in mammography, stereotactic breast biopsy, breast ultrasound and ultrasound-guided breast biopsy.

Comments About Really Excellent Service

Jennie Brannon

“My life has changed dramatically, but it doesn’t mean that I’m not still enjoying life,” said Margaret Watkins. “I’m a survivor due to a lot of prayers and God’s grace,” said Watkins. “I hope my story assures others that miracles does happen with prayers and faith.”