

Panhandle

Public Health District

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Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Take Time to Know Your Risk and Schedule Your Screening

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an important reminder for women across the Panhandle to learn about breast cancer risk, know what is normal for their bodies, and talk with a healthcare provider about when breast cancer screening is right for them.

An estimated 1,770 new cases of breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in Nebraska in 2026, according to the American Cancer Society. Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, excluding skin cancers. While there is no guaranteed way to prevent breast cancer, finding it early can make a significant difference. Mammograms can detect breast cancer before symptoms develop, when treatment may be more effective. Nebraska DHHS has previously reported that when breast cancer is found at its earliest, localized stage, the five-year relative survival rate is 99%.

"Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a great reminder to take care of something that can be easy to put off," said Heidi Wess, PA-C, and breast cancer survivor. "For women living in rural communities, we know accessing healthcare can sometimes require extra time, travel, and planning. Fortunately, mammography services are available at several locations throughout the Nebraska Panhandle."

Who Should Get a Mammogram?

Screening recommendations can vary based on age, personal health history, family history, and other risk factors. Women are encouraged to talk with their healthcare provider about their individual risk and determine the screening schedule that is right for them.

Women should also share with their healthcare provider if they have a family history of breast or ovarian cancer, have previously had an abnormal mammogram or breast biopsy, or notice a new or unusual change in their breasts.



Changes that should be discussed with a healthcare provider include a new lump or thickening, changes in the size or shape of the breast, dimpling or changes in the skin, nipple changes or discharge, or persistent breast or nipple pain.

Mammography Services in the Nebraska Panhandle

Residents can contact the following facilities directly for information about mammography services, scheduling, insurance requirements, financial assistance, and whether a provider referral is needed.

Box Butte General Hospital

2101 Box Butte Ave.
Alliance, NE 69301
308-761-1311

Outpatient Radiology

820 W. 42nd St., #1500
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
308-281-9729

Chadron Community Hospital

825 Centennial Drive
Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5586

Regional West Medical Center

3911 Avenue B, Suite 3200
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
308-630-2700, Option 1

Gordon Memorial Hospital

807 N. Ash Street
Gordon, NE 69343
308-337-4879

Sidney Regional Medical Center

1000 Pole Creek Crossing
Sidney, NE 69162
308-254-5825

Kimball Health Services

255 W. 4th Street
Kimball, NE 69145
308-235-1951

Is Cost a Concern?

Cost should not keep someone from asking about potentially lifesaving cancer screenings. Every Woman Matters is Nebraska's program designed to improve access to breast and cervical cancer screening.

The program serves eligible women ages 21–64 who are uninsured or underinsured and offers free or low-cost screening services through participating clinics across the Nebraska Panhandle.

To learn more or enroll in Every Woman Matters, call 1-800-532-2227.

Make Your Health a Priority This October

This Breast Cancer Awareness Month, encourage the women in your life to make their health a priority. If you've been putting off a mammogram, aren't sure when you should be screened, or are concerned about the cost of screening, now is a good time to start the conversation.

Talk with your healthcare provider about your personal risk and screening recommendations, contact a local mammography provider to schedule an appointment, or reach out to Every Woman Matters to learn about assistance that may be available.

Early detection is key. Taking a few minutes to schedule an appointment could make an important difference.

For more information about local health programs and resources, contact Nicole Berosek, Wellness and Prevention Program Manager, at nberosek@pphd.ne.gov, or 308-279-3496.

Did you see the latest PWWC newsletter? If not, check it out here: <https://pphd.ne.gov/pwwc.html> For additional information about worksite wellness, visit <http://www.pphd.ne.gov/pwwc.html> or call Berosek at 308-279-3496. The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District.

The Council specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.