



BEACON

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THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HEALTH BREAST CANCER PATIENT NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

It is making headline news, "Mammogram gap for minorities," "...racial minorities were inadequately screened," "...women of color are less likely than white women to be adequately screened for breast cancer." The Center for African American Health sees this news as a chance to challenge African-American women to take charge of their health by becoming educated about the tools they have to beat breast cancer.

In 2006, The Center for African American Health developed and implemented its Breast Cancer Patient Navigator Program thanks to a grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The program addresses barriers to quality standard care by providing individualized assistance to patients, survivors and families. Through aggressive outreach, the program teaches the African-American community about early detection, prevention, and the importance of periodic screenings. Beyond awareness, the program helps individual patients to get the screenings they need and works to close the typical gaps in care that can cause some African Americans to go untested or untreated.

These gaps in care include:

- + Referrals for mammography
- + Patients who do not understand their diagnosis
- + Patients who are not compliant with their treatment regimen
- + Lack of coordination and follow up by the patient and the health care provider

CONTINUED ON INSIDE COVER

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, yet it is reported that only 50 percent of African-American women get pap tests, and only one in five get regular mammograms or breast exams.

In this, our first issue of the revised *Beacon*, we will talk about some services that are available in our community which can help to alleviate some of the health disparities African Americans face around cancer education, prevention, screening, diagnosis and support.

While cancer is a reality for many African Americans, it does not have to be a death sentence. With awareness and education we can beat cancer. Live Well!



BREAST CANCER PATIENT NAVIGATOR PROGRAM – *CONTINUED*

"We, as nurses, are here to improve the preparedness of the people in our community by making sure they have the information and the resources that they need to get screened," said Emma Jackson, a congregational nurse with The Center's program. "African Americans need to know about the importance of early detection and then, if a diagnosis of breast cancer is made, they need to know that they have a point of contact, someone they, and their families can turn to for the help, as they go through treatment."

The Breast Cancer Navigator Program at The Center for African American Health teaches the community the significance of prevention through education. Those who take advantage of the outreach program learn how to perform breast self-examinations, which have been shown to lead to earlier detection of breast cancer. Participants also come to understand relevant information about breast health and the availability of local resources for treatment and support.

In addition to community breast health outreach, education, and prevention, the Navigator Program guides patients who have been diagnosed with breast cancer through what can be a confusing and difficult time by serving as an interpreter of difficult to understand medical terms, a liaison between the patient and the care provider and a resource for information about accessing treatment and support services. The result of this approach is improved outcomes for patients. Because of the work of the Nurse Navigator Team, patients are receiving:

- + Breast health education
- + Timely, definitive diagnosis following an abnormal test
- + Timely treatment following positive diagnosis
- + Satisfaction with the diagnostic and care system experience

"The relationship between the patient and the care provider is one built on trust," said Jackson. "As navigators, our role is not to make health care decisions for the patients or their families. We are a resource. A resource that is here to guide a patient and provide easy to understand explanations and information so each patient gets the care needed."

The Center offers the initial screening at no cost to the patient and provides each person with a referral for a mammogram. The program also reminds patients of appointments and follows up with patient care.



A MINUTE FOR YOUR HEALTH



In 2003, a book written by Dr. Stephanie Kong, *A Minute for Your Health, The ABC's for Improved Health and Longevity*, was published. Dr. Kong, the current chair of the Cultural Competence Committee of the Association of Black Cardiologists, wrote the book to provide families with 75 quick and easy, up-to-the-minute health tips that provide practical ways to respond to the myriad of health issues that face our society. Take for example this excerpt from Chapter Four, "What is Health?":

The World Health Organization in 1948 defined health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not mere absence of disease or infirmity." More and more scientists and doctors add that a state of spiritual well being is the fourth criteria that should be evaluated when you want to promote health. Taken together, health then becomes a state of complete physical, mental, social, and spiritual well being. To be truly healthy you have to pay attention to each aspect of your being on a daily basis.

Dr. Kong recommends that everyone go through a check list each day to ensure that he or she is making positive strides toward the four following goals:

1. **Physical Health:** What areas in your physical health need your attention?
2. **Mental Health:** What are you going to do today to nurture your emotions and mental health?
3. **Social Health:** What are you going to do today to interact with people in a positive way?
4. **Spiritual Health:** What are you going to do to feed your spiritual self?

Everyday you have the opportunity to be your best self and to accomplish great things in your life and in the lives of others. The Center for African American Health encourages you to take time to live well.

CANCER

DID YOU KNOW?

- + Cancer death occurs ten years earlier in African Americans than in Whites.
- + One out of two White Americans who have cancer are completely cured, but only one out of three African American patients are cured.
- + African American men are at higher risk for prostate cancer than any population in the world.
- + There are two million breast cancer survivors in the U.S., about 40,000 in Colorado alone.
- + Men can get breast cancer too. Men tend to discover they have breast cancer between ages 60 and 70.
- + Two African American men, per 100,000, develop breast cancer, compared to one White man, per 100,000.

CLASSES, SERVICES AND WORKSHOPS

Free Mammograms

The Center for African American Health, through a grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation, is offering free mammograms to African Americans who are uninsured or under-insured. To take advantage of this opportunity, contact The Center for African American Health at 303-355-3423 and ask to speak with one of the nurses. Please be prepared to leave a message with your contact information; your call will be returned.

Diabetes

The Center for African American Health offers a number of classes and workshops for those living with diabetes, at high risk for diabetes, and those caring for someone with diabetes. All classes and workshops require advance registration. Please contact the Diabetes Health Office at 303-355-3423.

SEPTEMBER 11

Focus on Diabetes Self-Management Class

The Center for African American Health

3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Denver, CO 80205

SEPTEMBER 16, 23, 30

Free Prostate Screenings

The Center for African American Health

For more information please call
303-355-3423

NOVEMBER 17

The Center for African American Health

Annual Dinner, Adams Mark Hotel,
Downtown Denver

Purchase your ticket or reserve a
table today, 303-355-3423

FAITH AND HEALTH MINISTRIES HEALTH LIAISON: MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

Three years ago, the phone rang at New Beginnings Cathedral of Worship. The Center for African American Health was calling to identify a Health Liaison from each of its more than 40 member churches. Pastor, Ramona Brown asked Sandra Coleman if she would like the job.

Coleman, a nurse in the dialysis unit at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Denver, accepted. "When I started, it was a new concept for me, this idea of communicating health information to the community through the church," said Coleman. "Within a couple of meetings the idea evolved for me. I came to understand and appreciate what the program had to offer the community and see how it was truly beneficial."

The Center's Health Liaison Program embraces the holistic approach to congregational wellness by addressing the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of church members. "The greatest difference I have seen in my church is the increased awareness about breast and prostate cancer," said Coleman. She targets her health messages by working with her church's active men's and women's ministry programs, energizing each group around how important it is for individuals to be advocates for their health and wellness.

"One of the greatest things about The Center is its focus on eliminating the health disparities that disproportionately impact our community" said Coleman. "The Center does this by arming liaisons with resources that we can use to get the word out. It is very powerful."

The Center for African American Health thanks Sandra Coleman for her commitment and dedication to improving the lives of so many.



Sandra Coleman



EXPERT

ASK THE EXPERT

When should I have a mammogram?

It is recommended that all women aged 40 and older have a screening mammogram every year. These mammograms should continue as long as you are in good health. If you are at high risk for breast cancer, your physician may recommend that you have a mammogram at an earlier age or more frequently.

What other tests should be used for breast cancer detection?

If you are in your 20s or 30s, you should have a clinical breast exam (CBE) by a health professional as part of your regular physical examination. A CBE should be conducted at least every three years. Once you have reached age 40, a CBE should be conducted by a health professional every year.

A breast self-examination (BSE) should be considered by all women in their 20s and above. BSEs are not a substitute for clinical breast examinations or mammograms, but they can help you learn the normal feel of your breasts. In turn, this may help you detect changes and seek immediate attention for them.

What signs might indicate breast cancer?

The early stages of breast cancer may not have any signs or symptoms. For this reason, it is important to follow the recommended screening guidelines. When a tumor grows and breast cancer progresses, you may have a number of symptoms, including a lump or thickening in your breast or underarm, a change in the shape of your breast, or ridges and pitting in your skin. You may notice redness or scaling of the skin or discharge from your nipple as well.

What steps will be taken if I have an abnormal mammogram?

There are several options that may follow an abnormal mammogram. In some cases, your physician may recommend a repeat mammogram in a few months. Or, you may receive an ultrasound to help determine if the abnormality is solid (possible cancer) or fluid filled (such as a benign cyst). You may be referred to a physician for a needle biopsy if a lump can be felt in addition to the abnormality on the mammogram.

How is breast cancer diagnosed?

A biopsy is the only definitive way to know if you have cancer. It allows your physician to obtain cells from the suspicious tissue for examination under a microscope. There are different

types of biopsies, and your doctor will determine the best kind depending on your particular mass.

Once the tissue is removed, it is examined by a pathologist to determine if it is cancerous. If it is, the pathologist can obtain a great deal of information from the sample, including the type of cancer, the level of abnormality, and whether it has spread to surrounding tissues. Additional tests may be performed on the tissue to help plan treatment and gain information for your prognosis.

What are the treatment options?

Your treatment will depend on a number of factors such as the size, location and type of the cancer. The stage of the cancer, your age, and general health will also affect your treatment options. Surgical treatment possibilities include lumpectomy and various types of mastectomy. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy may be used before or after surgery depending on your individual case. You also may receive hormone therapy or some form of biological therapy. Most patients receive a combination of these treatments.

What are the risk factors?

Many risk factors for breast cancer cannot be controlled. Females over the age of 50 simply have a higher likelihood of developing breast cancer. A family history of the disease and certain genetic mutations also raise your risk. Some factors, however, such as weight, diet and physical activity, can be controlled. Maintaining a healthy weight, eating a balanced diet, and exercising can help reduce your risk of breast cancer. In addition, limiting alcohol use and not using tobacco improve your chances of living a life without breast cancer.

Can breast cancer be prevented?

There is no sure way to prevent breast cancer. The most important action you can take is to follow recommended detection guidelines. Receive regular mammograms and clinical breast examinations to increase your odds of detecting cancer at its earliest stage. If you notice any changes in your breast or in your armpits, immediately consult a physician. You may not be able to prevent breast cancer, but you can improve your chance of successful treatment and survival with early detection.

HEALTH RESOURCES:

Support Groups:

Kids Alive! Cancer Care Center
2525 S. Downing Street
Denver, CO
303-778-5832

Rocky Mountain Cancer Center
1900 Williams Street
Denver, CO
303-298-4876

Sister to Sister Breast Cancer Program
Sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
P.O. Box 7432
Denver, CO
303-771-8794

Support Organizations and Services:
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
1935 Franklin Street
Denver, CO
303-744-2089
www.susankomen.org

The Center for African American Health
Breast Cancer Patient Navigator Program
3601 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Denver, CO
303-955-3423

Day of Caring Breast Cancer
Resource Center
1600 Pierce Street
Denver, CO
303-239-3434

Books:
Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book
By Dr. Susan Love, MD

*Living Beyond Breast Cancer:
A Survivor's Guide for When Treatment
Ends and the Rest of Your Life Begins*
By Marisa Weiss, MD

*Because Someone I Love Has Cancer
Children's Book*
By American Cancer Society

Can I Still Kiss You?
Children's Book
By Neil Russell

CENTER PARTNERS

The Women's Imaging Center

Ptarmigan Place
3773 Cherry Creek North Drive
Denver, CO 80209
303-321-2273

The Women's Imaging Center provides a comprehensive approach to medical care. Staffed by three doctors and board certified radiologists, the Women's Imaging Center provides a peaceful and comfortable environment for patients. The quality of the staff onsite enables the Women's Imaging Center to interpret and report imaging results as soon as possible. While the program offered by The Center for African American Health is for mammography, the Women's Imaging Center offers a wider range of services:

- + Mammography
- + Non-Surgical Breast Biopsy
- + Thyroid Ultrasound
- + Gynecologic Ultrasound
- + Abdominal Ultrasound
- + Bone Densitometry

The Center for African American Health, in its Breast Cancer Patient Navigator Program, refers its patients to The Women's Imaging Center. "The Women's Imaging Center is conveniently located," said Mella Dee Warren, a Congregational Nurse with The Center for African American Health. "The Women's Imaging Center treats our patients with dignity, respect, and compassion."

The Women's Imaging Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.





RECIPE

HEALTHY CHICKEN QUESADILLAS

Serve these with a refreshing green salad as dinner, or slice into smaller triangles as an appetizer.

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

2 tbsp. chicken broth
1/4 cup onion, chopped
1 small clove garlic, minced
1/4 cup bell pepper, chopped
2 chili peppers, minced
3 plum tomatoes, chopped
Non-stick cooking spray
8 flour tortillas
1 cup reduced fat cheddar cheese, shredded
1 1/2 cups chicken, cooked
Garnish: Salsa and fat-free sour cream

1. In a medium heavy skillet sauté the onions, garlic and peppers in the 2 tablespoons chicken broth until soft.
2. Add the chili peppers and tomatoes and simmer for a few minutes more until the liquid has evaporated.
3. Add the chicken and stir well to combine.
4. Spray a cold skillet with the non-stick spray and heat over medium heat.
5. Place a tortilla in the pan and sprinkle with 1/8 cup cheese.
6. Add about a quarter of the chicken mixture and top with another 1/8 cup cheese.
7. Cover with another tortilla and cook for 2-3 minutes or until brown.
8. Flip the quesadilla over and cook for an additional two minutes.
9. Remove from the heat and cut into wedges.
10. Keep warm while frying the remaining quesadillas.
11. Serve with salsa and fat-free sour cream.

Based on individual serving.

Calories: 311, Total Fat: 7 g, Carbohydrates: 43 g, Protein: 18 g

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Your Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

May we recognize you publicly for this gift? Yes No

Gift Amount: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: \$ _____

My check is enclosed (please hand deliver any cash donation)
Please make all checks payable to The Center for African American Health.

Charge my credit card
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Card Number: _____ Exp: _____ CCV: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Send your donation to:

The Center for African
American Health
3801 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Denver, CO 80205

For information about planned
giving or donating your time to The
Center, please call 303-355-3423
or visit www.caahealth.org

The Center for African American
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the IRS limits.

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To contact any of these
staff members, please
call 303-855-3423.

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The Center for African American Health. A newsletter for our partners and supporters. Please visit us online www.caahealth.org.



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