

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Women Over 40 Encouraged to Observe Breast Cancer Awareness

National Cyber Security, Clergy Appreciation, Domestic Violence, Principal Appreciation, Animal Rescue – all important issues designated for special attention in October. October is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Women, especially women over 40, are encouraged to focus some of their October energies on themselves with a clinical breast exam and mammogram.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women. (Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death.) One in eight women develops breast cancer and early detection is the most important strategy in surviving the disease. Based on the evidence of numerous studies, the Susan G. Komen Foundation recommends that women over 40 receive a clinical breast exam and a mammogram every year. Katherine Tetrault, Physician Assistant at the Ruby Valley Clinic, reports that the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends women receive clinical breast exams every 1-3 years starting at age 20. Monthly self-exams are an excellent self-care practice and often provide the earliest warning signal. It helps to find a regular, monthly event that will act as a reminder for your self-exam. For post-menopausal women, this might be payday or a monthly meeting.

In Southwest Montana, mammogram testing is available at Barrett Hospital in Dillon, St. James Hospital in Butte and Bozeman Deaconess Hospital in Bozeman. A medical order from your healthcare provider is required for the test. These preventive tests are typically covered in full by most health insurance plans.

Preventive measures you can take to reduce your risk to breast cancer include regular exercise, healthy weight, and limited alcohol consumption. Ms. Tetrault advises that some postmenopausal hormones might increase the risk of breast cancer. Your healthcare provider can provide the details of the benefits and risks of post-menopausal hormone replacement therapies for your particular circumstances. If you're planning to have children, breastfeeding can reduce the risk of breast cancer. Also, be aware of any change in your breast or underarm area. If you notice any change, contact your healthcare provider right away. Delay will likely increase your risk factors.

The Ruby Valley Hospital and Ruby Valley Medical Clinics encourages the women in our community to take some time for themselves by contacting their healthcare provider for a breast exam appointment and a mammogram.

For more information about women's health, please visit –

[The Women's Health Initiative](#)
[The Susan G. Komen Foundation](#)
[Women's Health Issues](#)
[Heart Attack Symptoms for Women](#)

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