

## 12 Deadly Symptoms of Breast Cancer and How to Prevent the Risk of Tumors

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The very word “Cancer” makes us feel scared and vulnerable, but most of it stems from the fact that we are largely ignorant of; that breast cancer can not only be prevented, but cured, if caught in the early stages. This deep-rooted fear should be replaced by awareness and a strong will to be healthy and fight the disease. [What is cancer](#), actually? Cancer results from mutations that instigate abnormal changes in the genes which help regulate the growth of cells and keeping them healthy.



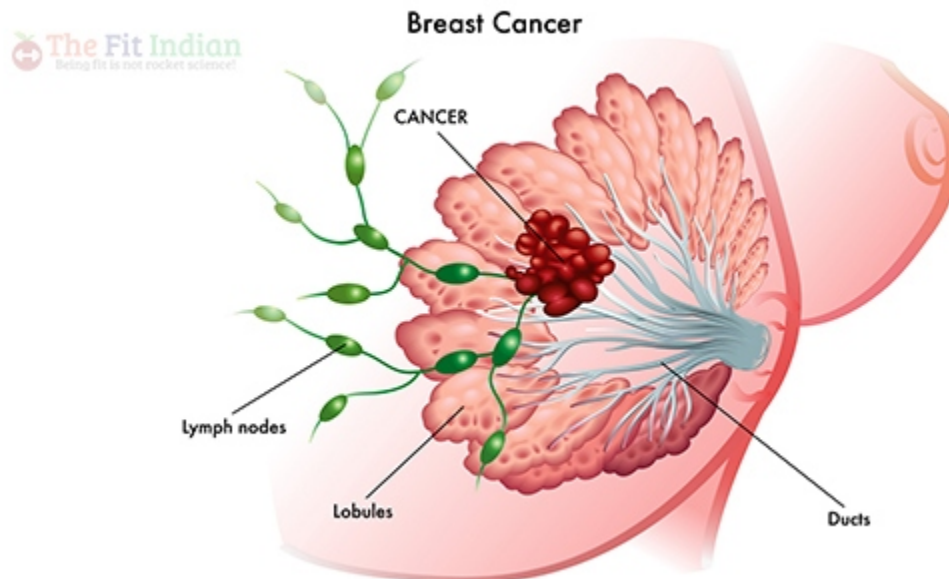
The genes are found in the cell’s nucleus, which sort of controls the cells. Usually, the cells found in our bodies proliferate in an orderly method of cell growth: healthy new cells replace old the ones which die out. But sometimes due to some trigger factors, mutations can incite certain genes and stop activating others in a cell. That change in the cellular structure develops the ability to keep proliferating without any order or control, leading to tumors.

A tumor can be of two types: either benign, deemed harmless; or malignant, which tends to grow into cancer cells, causing potential damage to your health. Benign tumors are not considered harmful: they resemble normal cells, their growth is slow and they also do not invade the nearby healthy tissues or spread to other parts of the body.

Malignant tumors, of course, are cancerous. If they are not checked early, these cells eventually can spread to other parts of the body, causing unmitigated damage.

## What is Breast Cancer?

The term “breast cancer” refers to a malignant tumor that has grown from the cells in the breast. So where do the breast cancer cells begin to grow? Usually, the breast cancer either starts to grow right in the cells of the lobules, which are known as the milk-producing glands, or the ducts. These are the pathways that drain the milk from the lobules to the nipple. Less commonly, breast cancer can also originate from the stromal tissues, which is the seat of the fatty and fibrous connective tissues of the breast.



Once the cancer cells begin to proliferate, they insidiously invade the nearby healthy breast tissue and affect the underarm lymph nodes, which are instrumental in filtering out foreign substances from the body. If cancer cells sneak into the lymph nodes, they can invade other parts of the body. The breast cancer’s stage or any cancer stage refers to how far the cancer cells have proliferated beyond the original tumor.

Breast cancer is always caused by abnormalities in genes. But that accounts for only 5-10% of breast cancer occurrences, inherited as a faulty gene from either the mother or father’s gene makeup.

The remaining 85-90% of breast cancers are due to genetic abnormalities caused by the aging process and the impact of your current lifestyle, read, the [effect of a bad lifestyle](#). Sometimes it is the culmination of all these reasons, which cause breast cancer.

## Signs and Symptoms of Breast Cancer

Thanks to our unhealthy lifestyle or just the fact that we are ingesting far more chemicals than we should – through our food, our cosmetics care products, our immediate environment and so on, 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 1 in 1,000 men. Being proactive and knowing your body well is one way of increasing your survival chances. Check out these [12 symptoms of breast cancer](#) which can save your life.



- **Hardening of breast skin-** Be aware of sudden hardening of breast tissues or skin.
- **Indentation on your breast skin-** Be more conscious of indentation marks that appear on your breast.
- **Skin Erosion-** Keep a track on the texture of the skin; if you notice any changes, make sure you visit your doctor.
- **Redness or Heat-** Be more aware of redness on your skin or heat. It may seem harmless, but it can hide a more sinister cause.
- **Breast leakage or leakage-** Any leakage emanating from your nipples is not normal, you have to get it checked as soon as possible.
- **Dimpling-** If you notice changes in the texture of your skin, get yourself evaluated at the earliest.
- **Lumps or bumps-** Don't think that any lump or bump will disappear on its own. It needs to be investigated thoroughly.
- **Growing or hardening of vein-** If you do notice a vein on your breast thickening and growing, it needs immediate evaluation, without fail.



- **Nipple Retraction or nipple pull back-** Pay careful attention to your breast if your nipple of your breast is pulled back for some reason.
- **New Asymmetry-** If you notice asymmetry between the breasts, you need to get it checked as soon as possible.
- **Orange Peel Skin-** This is another change which you must be mindful about. A change in the texture is often regarded as an early breast cancer sign. Sometimes they are too small to get detected by a mammogram. If you detect a change in the texture, you should absolutely insist for a thermo gram or MRI.
- **Invisible Lump-** Sometimes you do not see a lump, but you what might seem like a frozen pea, lemon seed or something larger in size. Never ignore this kind of lump and discuss your concerns with your doctor. An early diagnosis can be enormously impactful.

Don't encourage feelings of shame or uncertainties, and do not while away your time, thinking that the signs and symptoms of breast cancer will go away on their own. They won't, you have to be proactive and take the next essential step as soon as possible.

## How to Prevent Breast Cancer

Everything that we do, right from the crack of dawn till the time we hit the sack, we are either courting breast cancer or fighting it. It ranges from what we eat and drink to whether we devote enough time to exercise and whether we try to avoid BPA, parabens, and other potentially harmful carcinogenic chemicals; everything is linked.



You not only have to be aware of the change and shape of your breast, but also trace the history and health line of both your parents. However, you can reduce your risk of breast cancer considerably. Follow these tips to a tee and you will be able to protect yourself from the deadly clutches of cancer.

## 1. Exercise

Exercise can protect you from breast cancer in more than one way. It definitely helps [control weight](#), and there are a number of other reasons as well. One, it protects you from excessive estrogen, which can activate cell overgrowth and tumors.



Before you hit menopause, you get estrogen from your ovaries, but afterward, you get your estrogen from your fat tissues, so the more weight you put on, the greater are the possibilities of you getting affected by breast cancer.

Also, exercise balances the ratio of good and bad estrogen. Among women who exercise, the ratio shows a marked improvement, and among women who skip exercise, the ratio does not move.



That does not mean you have to spend all your wakeful hours at the gym. Just clock 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensive exercise and you will be amazed at the wonderful impact it has on the body.

## 2. Be wary of hormone replacement therapy

Long term usage of combined estrogen and progestin can up your risk of breast cancer by several notches. If you still think you need the help of hormone therapy once you hit menopause, make sure you keep the dose to the minimum and for the shortest stipulated time.



If you suffer from the effects of a surgically induced menopause, talk to your doctor so that he/she recommends some alternative solutions.

## 3. Breastfeeding is the best option

Breastfeeding is best for your baby, we already know that, what we also have to know is that breastfeeding is good for the mother as well.

As a woman does not menstruate during the time of breastfeeding, she limits the number of cycles she has over a lifetime, so she is less exposed to estrogen and hence, minimizes her risk of getting breast cancer.

## 4. Eat right

There have been researches which have proved that women who consumed a greater number of carotenoids, had much lesser chances of getting breast cancer, compared to those who have consumed a minimal amount. Carotenoids are found in fruits and vegetables like carrots, leafy vegetables, and red bell peppers.



Other potent phytonutrients to fight breast cancer are lycopene, found in tomatoes; and sulforaphane, found in cruciferous vegetables. All these [vegetables must be included in your diet](#). Doctors and nutritionists are of the opinion that you must add at least five to six servings of fruits and vegetables every single day to reap the benefits.

Also, stay away from processed food, especially processed meats, and choose whole grains over refined stuff. Last but not the least, limit your alcohol intake to one drink a day, if you have to have a glassful, that is.

## 5. Minimize radiation exposure

It is the strangest thing ever, that the very surveillance tool for breast cancer, mammograms, can also significantly increase your chances of getting the disease. It is mainly because ionizing radiation is said to bring about genetic mutation.



It is not only mammograms, but airport security screening machines and X-rays are also responsible for causing harmful radiation. So every time you are recommended an X-ray, make sure you understand the reason why you are asked to get one in the first place.

## 6. Have your genes screened

If you have a strong family history of multiple cancers, you should consider going for genetic counseling.

If you have a genetic mutation like BRAC 1 and BRAC 2, your risk for getting cancer rises, so knowing that you are at risk can help in prevention and also early detection.

## 7. Add garlic to your diet

This wonder bulb helps stave off cancer like no other. But if you want to reap maximum benefits of this herb, you need to cut it and let it sit for a bit, before consumption. This will help activate alliinase, the enzyme that helps develop a cancer-fighting compound.



## 8. Eat more beans

It is said that women who ate beans at least twice a week are less likely to develop breast cancer than those who do not have them often.

Legumes also reduce the risk of breast cancer, mainly because of their ability to suppress the production of enzymes that encourage tumor growth.

## 9. Stop Smoking

Though smoking is [known to cause lung cancer](#), it can have a detrimental effect on the mouth, larynx, and esophagus as well, and smokers are much more likely to cause stomach, liver, prostate, cervical, colorectal, and breast cancers.





So if you give up smoking now, you can lessen your chances of cancer to a great extent. You should also be aware that passive smoking has terrible repercussions on your health, so encourage all around you to give up the puff!

#### 10. Eliminate stress from your life

The first step in combating any disease is to eliminate stress; and for the prevention of breast cancer, you need to do the same. You can do so by trying [different breathing techniques](#), pranayama, and yoga; and also it is imperative that you get at least 7-8 hours of sleep everyday. Poor sleep can hinder melatonin production, which increases insulin resistance and weight gain, the two things that increase cancer risk.

#### 11. Optimize your vitamin D levels

There have been countless studies which have proven that optimizing vitamin D levels can slash your risk of cancer by half. So, you need to regularly screen your vitamin D level and get it as high as 80 ng/ml.



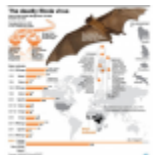
Consider supplementation if you are low on vitamin D levels; close to twenty minutes of absorbing sunlight in the morning always helps.

The alarming rates of breast cancer incidences are certainly a cause for concern. Try and make those all-important lifestyle changes to prevent the disease or at least reduce the risk. Listen to what your body has to say to you, by way of **signs of breast cancer** and stop the disease right in its tracks. When it comes to your health, you have to take matters into your own hands to expect any positive changes, especially when it comes to a disease as deadly as cancer.

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