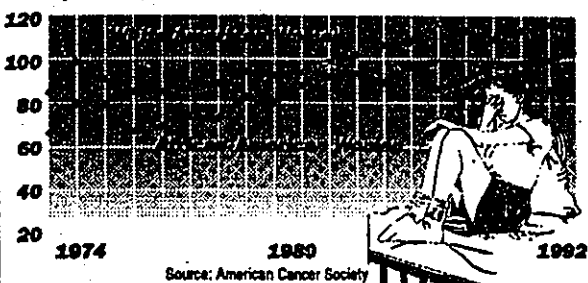


## Breast cancer incidence

White American women have a higher incidence of breast cancer than African-American women. However, over the past 20 years the incidence of breast cancer for both groups has continued to rise.

Rate per 100,000 women



Richard Ashton / Copley News Service

## Breast cancer primer

*Early detection, improved treatment offer women hope*

BY PRISCILLA LESTER  
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

Current estimates predict one woman in eight in the United States will develop breast cancer during her lifetime, according to the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

Some 185,700 cases of breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in 1996, while 44,660 women are expected to die from the disease, making breast cancer second only to lung cancer as a cause of cancer death among women.

There is some good news: The breast cancer death rate in American women has continued to decline in recent years. The overall death rate from the disease for American women fell about 5 percent from 1989 to 1993.

Recent declines in breast cancer mortality are partly attributed to both earlier detection and improved treatment, according to NCI.

### Risk factors

First of all, be aware of established risk factors for breast cancer. NCI researchers have estimated that:

- 29.5 percent of breast cancer cases are attributable to being age 20+ at first birth or never having children.
- 18.9 percent are attributable to having a moderate or high income.
- 9.1 percent are attributable to having a family history of breast cancer.

These three factors were determined from a study of over 7,500 women conducted from 1971 to 1987. Consider the following factors as well:

Incidence of breast cancer rises with age. About 73 percent of women with

### Information, please

The National Cancer Institute offers CancerFax, a quick and easy way to obtain cancer information. NCI fact sheets on various cancer topics, in English or Spanish, are as close as a fax machine. Simply dial the following number from a fax machine and listen to the prompts.

Dial (301) 402-5874 from a fax machine and first obtain the index list for the document numbers you'll select. You will be charged only for the phone call from your fax machine to the Bethesda, Md., NCI Communications Office. Copies of the documents you select will be immediately faxed to your machine.

Breast cancer information available includes fact sheets on treatment, screening, mammography for various ethnic groups, an overview of NCI's research and programs, including contacts, and clinical trials that seek patients. Such information is available on virtually every form of cancer.

NCI's Cancer Information Service may also be mailed to you by calling (800) 422-6237.

And NCI's World Wide Web site address is <http://www.widc.nci.nih.gov>.

breast cancer are over age 50.

A high-fat diet and sedentary lifestyle may also be risk factors.

### Prevention

While some factors, like heredity, are uncontrollable, many experts say lifestyle choices can make a difference in cancer incidence. While studies remain controversial, evidence seems

See PRIMER, A12

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