

## Cancer Awareness & Prevention

Written by Business Health Services

October is nationally recognized as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. While we spend this month boosting awareness of the disease, its implications, and the steps being taken toward finding a cure, it is also important to recognize that many of the same precautions recommended for preventing breast cancer apply to everyone to decrease their risk for all types of cancer!

### Did you know?

- About 571,950 Americans are expected to die this year from cancer. That's more than 1,500 people each day.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the US, exceeded only by heart disease.
- An estimated 1.6 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2011.
- The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2011 alone, about 171,600 cancer deaths will be caused by tobacco use. All cancers caused by cigarette smoking and heavy use of alcohol could be prevented completely.

### What can you do?

Studies suggest that lifestyle choices and behaviors such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity increase one's risk of cancer. By eating a balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight (BMI less than 25), protecting your skin from excess sunlight exposure, and not using tobacco, you can decrease your risk for cancer. It is never too late to make positive lifestyle changes. Consider taking the following steps:

**1. Don't smoke.** If you currently smoke - kick the habit! Statistics show this is the single most important step you can take to reduce your risk of cancer as well as many other life-threatening diseases. About half of all American who smoke will die because of the habit. People who quit smoking, regardless of age, live longer than people who continue to smoke. The right combination of support, advice, and possibly medicine can help you quit for good, even if you've tried and failed in the past. Be aware of your options.

**2. Eat healthy.** Certain dietary patterns are linked to increased cancer risks, while others have been credited with reducing it:

- *Focus on plant-based foods.* Plants have less fat, more fiber, and more cancer-fighting nutrients. Eat five or more servings of vegetables and fruits each day.
- *Bulk up on fiber.* Fiber helps keep food moving through your digestive tract and it also moves cancer-causing compounds out before they can cause harm. Choose whole grains instead of processed grains and sugars.
- *Choose cancer-fighting food.* Your immune system keeps you healthy by fighting off unwanted invaders in your body, including cancer cells. Limit saturated fats and added sugars. Pick foods that are rich in antioxidants. Green tea and berries are great choices!
- *Prepare your food in healthy ways.* Wash or peel all fruits and vegetables. Washing does not eliminate all pesticide residues, but will reduce it.

3. Avoid drinking too much alcohol. Drinking more than one or two alcoholic beverages a day increases your risk of developing certain types of cancer, especially if you smoke.

Get physical. Physically active adults have up to a 50% reduced risk of cancer compared to those who have little to no regular physical activity. Stroll with colleagues after lunch, walk over to a coworker's desk rather than emailing or start an exercise group with your neighborhoods.

5. Protect your skin. As the weather begins to cool, it is important to remember to protect your skin from the sun. Even on overcast days, 80% of harmful UVA rays make their way through the clouds. Apply a lotion with an SPF of at least 20 as part of your morning routine. Reapply throughout the day, especially if you are participating in outdoor activities.

**WELLFIT PROGRAM UPDATE...  
look for an announcement shortly  
regarding the relaunch of the  
Merritt WellFit Program and the  
changes coming in 2012!**

# Fun Events for October

We have teams set up online for a couple of walks happening in October, plus there are a couple of other fun events promoting Breast Cancer Awareness Month. If you cannot attend the walks, please considering donating to our team online.

## October 4th

Kick off Breast Cancer Awareness Month by helping The Tyanna Foundation & Merritt Properties light the city dome PINK! The Tyanna Barre O'Brien Breast Cancer Foundation will light the dome of Baltimore City Hall PINK in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Merritt Properties is sponsoring the event. Details for the Lighting of the Dome will be announced during Healthy City Days at a FREE work out at the Harborplace Amphitheatre on Tuesday, Oct 4, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Fitness Expert and Celebrity Trainer Monte Sanders will be in attendance. The public is invited to work their body and wear pink to show support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month!



## October 13th

**The Merritt Pink Day** - Breast Cancer Goodie Sale and Raffle will be on Thursday, October 13th at noon in the kitchen. We welcome any pink goodies. A donation box will be there for those that come to eat. We are asking for a donation of at least \$5. All donations will be added to the proceeds from the walk.

Making  
Strides



## October 16th

**Making Strides Against Breast Cancer** walk in Baltimore on Oct 16, 2011. Location – Harry and Jeanette Weinberg YMCA at Stadium Place, 900 East 33rd Street, Baltimore, MD 21218 Registration will begin at 8:00 am.

Walk begins at 9:00 am rain or shine. The Police will be opening streets to traffic after 9:35 am, so please remember the importance of starting to walk before then.

It can take between 1 & 1½ hours to walk the 4 mile route.

All participants need to check-in at the registration tent the day of the event. Participants not registered online should bring a completed registration form and all money raised to the event (Otherwise, they will be asked to fill out another form so we can ensure that the proper participant is credited). All participants registered online need to go to the Registration Tent as well



(there will be a special area for Online Registrants to check-in and turn in any offline cash and check donations they have received). Additional donations may be mailed in or dropped off post-event.

The Survivor Photo will be taken at the Survivor Tent at 8:45 a.m. Please encourage your team's survivors to come for this awesome capture of pink. (See our photo of Team Merritt 2010 at the top of this page.)

To sign up for the Merritt Team -- [www.stridesbaltimore.org](http://www.stridesbaltimore.org) Click on SIGNUP and then click on JOIN A TEAM – type Merritt and Search for a Team. Then click on Join a team, next to Merritt Properties, LLC.

American Heart  
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## October 22nd

**The Greater Baltimore Heart Walk** is set for Saturday, October 22 and is at a NEW LOCATION THIS YEAR!!! We are at Rash Field across from Federal Hill Park - we'll have more details about the new location coming soon. As always, both events have a 1-mile and 3-mile walking course. This is a non-competitive event, so lace up your walking shoes and come out for a great cause! Also, there is some UPDATED information for our SUPER STAR walkers. This year, there is a little change. If you raise \$500 or more (as an individual, not a team) you are eligible for FREE HOT BREAKFAST at the walk. If you raise \$1,000 (as an individual, not a team) you are eligible for FREE HOT BREAKFAST and FREE PARKING at the event (please note that the breakfast and parking are non-transferrable). Both events kick-off with activities at 9am and the walk at 10am. We look forward to seeing you there! We are looking forward to an AMAZING year with you! Let's hit the \$1 million mark!

To sign-up for the Merritt Team - [www.startwalkgreaterbaltimoremd.org](http://www.startwalkgreaterbaltimoremd.org) Click on REGISTER, then I AGREE, then JOIN A TEAM, then select a team, MERRITT PROPERTIES.

**Know of another great event this upcoming this fall? Contact Meg to get it listed and to get a Merritt Team going!**