## News from the Wyoming Department of Health

Tuesday, October 3, 2006

## **Department of Health Marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

With October designated as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Wyoming Department of Health representatives are encouraging Wyoming women to schedule regular mammograms and clinical breast examinations.

The American Cancer Society estimates that about 260 Wyoming women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and 50 will die from the disease.

Early detection is very important because it means better chances of survival, increased treatment options and improved quality of life. õWhile more and more women are getting mammograms to detect breast cancer in its earliest stages, we need to keep getting the word out in Wyoming,ö said Denise Padilla, professional development and recruitment coordinator with the Wyoming Department of Healthøs Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

According to the most recent Wyoming Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 68.5 percent of Wyoming women age 40 and older report having had a mammogram within the past two years as compared to the U.S. median of 74.8 percent.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women age 40 and older receive an annual mammogram and clinical breast examination, as well as perform monthly breast self-examinations (optional). Additionally, it is recommended that women age 20-39 receive a clinical breast examination every three years and perform monthly breast self-examinations (optional).

The Wyoming Department of Health& Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program pays for mammograms, clinical breast exams, pap tests and pelvic exams for women who are 50-64 years of age, without health insurance and low-income. As an income guideline example, a woman who lives alone can earn up to \$2,042 per month. To find out if you may be eligible, call 1-800-264-1296.

õFor most women, cost should not be a barrier to obtaining mammograms. Medicare (Part B), Medicaid and group health plans may also cover mammogram costs,ö Padilla said.

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