

## Breast Cancer in South Carolina



### Advocates Speak out in support of the Best Chance Network (BCN) and Medicaid Treatment act.

XXXX women are screened each year through BCN

XXXX women with abnormal results received treatment in 2008 thanks to the Medicaid Treatment Act.

### Where we are

Breast cancer is unusual because incidence is higher in European-American women, but the mortality rate is higher in African-American women. This is especially striking at younger ages when women tend to have the most aggressive forms of the disease. This difference in the age at presentation is consistent with higher incidence of more aggressive forms of breast cancer in African-American women. We need to work to eliminate the racial disparity in mortality. Fortunately, mammography screening has been shown to be efficacious in reducing mortality. There also are lifestyle behaviors, especially physical activity and diet, that appear reduce the chance of developing breast cancer. Breast cancer is a major focus of cancer-related research in South Carolina.

### Statistics for Breast Cancer, 2001-2005

- Breast Cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women (estimates 2,820 new cases this year)
- It is the second largest cause of deaths among women (estimated 640 deaths this year)
- It is the 3rd largest cause of cancer deaths overall
- Black women have 12% fewer cases of breast cancer than white women, but have a 39% greater risk for mortality; i.e., both significantly lower incidence and higher mortality.
- If diagnosed early, the 5-year survival rates is 98% compared to 84% if cancer spread to nearby lymph nodes

### Call to Action!

#### South Carolinians:

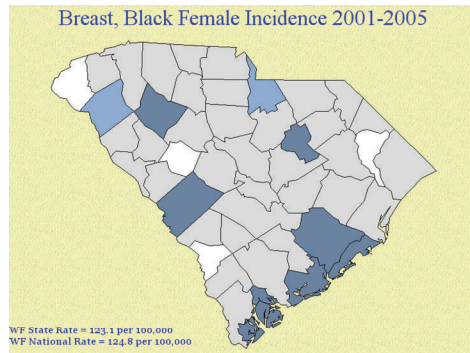
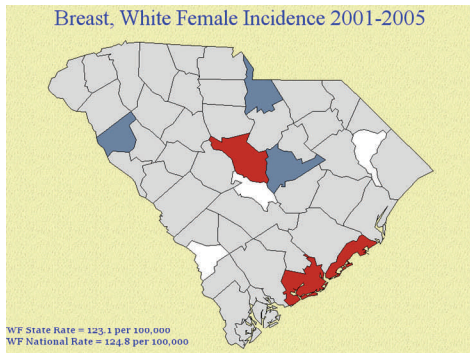
Encourage women to be screened for breast cancer at recommended intervals  
Eat more fruits and vegetables, less meat, and lower-fat diets  
Maintain a healthy weight  
Increase/promote physical activity  
Limit alcohol drinking

#### Legislators: in addition to the above

Support legislation to increase breast and cervical cancer screening  
Increase breast cancer screening messages in your community

#### Hospital or Medical Facility Administrators:

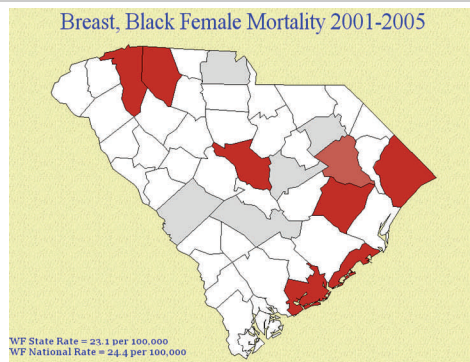
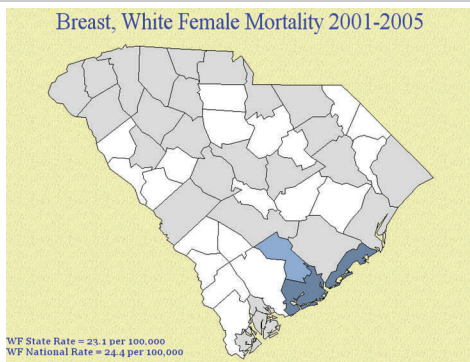
Provide meeting space for cancer support groups  
Encourage participation in clinical trials  
Encourage design and participation in trials of women with early-stage cancer who have finished therapy



\* Counties that are not shaded have fewer than 20 cases/deaths of cancer over the 5 year period (2001-2005). Working with small numbers can lead to instability in the calculated age-adjusted rates for mortality and incidence. As a result statistics for these counties are not displayed.

**White females:** Charleston and Richland counties rated worst in the state for breast cancer incidence, Grade F. Abbeville, Lancaster, and Sumter counties rated best, Grade B. All other counties rated Grade C, no different than the state or nation for cancer incidence.

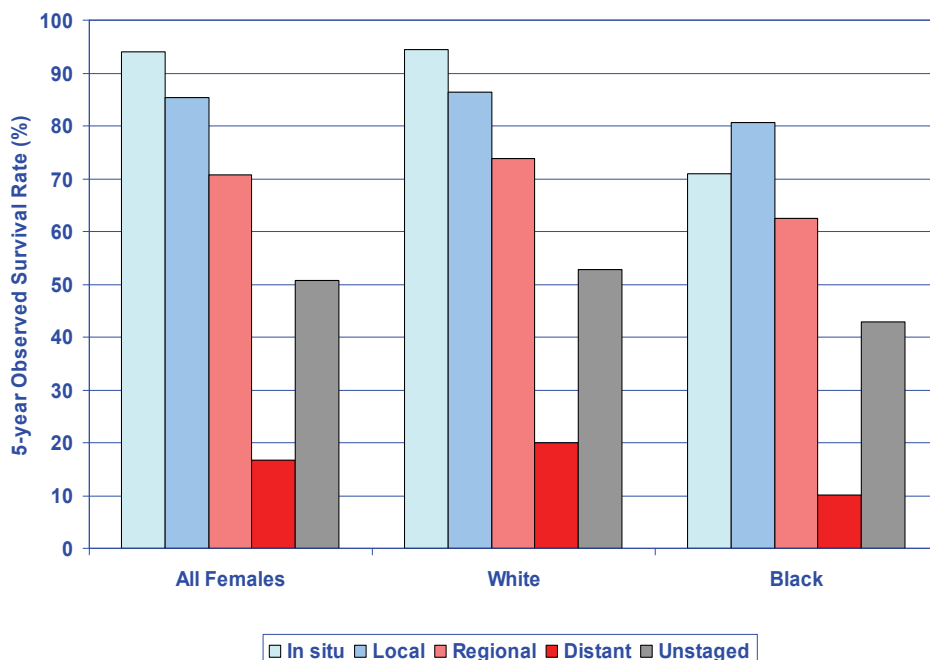
**Black females:** Anderson and Lancaster counties rated best in the state, Grade A. Aiken, Beaufort, Charleston, Laurens, and Lee counties rated better than the state at Grade B. All other counties rated Grade C, no different than the state or nation for cancer incidence.



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**White females:** While Charleston county rated poorly for cancer incidence, it rated best in the state for breast cancer deaths with Grade A. Dorchester county rated better than the state or nation with Grade B. All other counties rated Grade C, no different.

**Black females:** Six counties rated worst in the state for deaths due to breast cancer, Grade F: Charleston, Horry, Greenville, Richland, Spartanburg, and Williamsburg. Florence county rated worse than the state or nation, Grade D. All other counties rated no different, Grade C.



S.C. women with breast cancer diagnosed at the earliest stage, before any invasion or spread of cancer cells, have a 95% chance of survival for five years.

However, when S.C. women are diagnosed with breast cancer after regional or distant spread has occurred, the chance of surviving five years drops to 70% then 17%, respectively.

White women in S.C. have higher five-year survival rates than black women for breast cancer at each stage of disease at diagnosis.

Note: excludes *in situ* cancers and children (ages 0-19)  
Source: South Carolina Central Cancer Registry