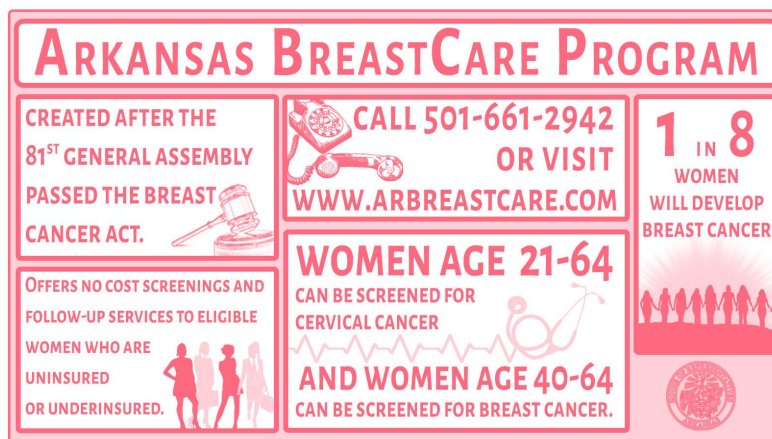




Arkansas House Newsletter

October 15, 2021

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



According to the Arkansas Department of Health, 1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer.

It is the most common form of cancer and the second leading cause of death among women. In 2018, there were 2,339 new breast cancer cases and 368 cancer deaths in the state.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the impact of breast cancer and the importance of early detection.

In 1997, the Arkansas General Assembly passed the Breast Cancer Act, which led to the ADH's BreastCare program. The BreastCare program coordinates efforts with providers to offer no-cost screenings and follow-up services to eligible women who are uninsured or underinsured.

Last year, the program served 8,403 women in fiscal year 2021. Those services resulted in 62 Arkansas women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer.

The General Assembly continually reviews legislation to improve services for early detection.

In the most recent legislative session, we passed Act 553.

ACT 553 amends the law concerning coverage of diagnostic examinations for breast cancer under certain health benefit plans. It clarifies that an insurer, upon the recommendation of a woman's physician, must offer screening mammography as an essential health benefit if the woman has a prior history of breast cancer or the woman's mother, sister, or any first- or second-degree female relative of the woman has had a history of breast cancer, positive genetic testing, or other risk factors.

According to the American Cancer Society, when breast cancer is detected early and is in the localized stage, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%. Early detection includes doing monthly breast self-exams and scheduling regular clinical breast exams and mammograms.

The Arkansas Department of Health is encouraging women to talk with their healthcare providers about getting screened. If you would like more information on the BreastCare program, call 501-661-2942 or visit www.ARBreastCare.com