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Quick News & Links:

[November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month! Use the MCC Tool of the Month to help promote lung cancer awareness.](#)

[Save the Date! The Maternal Infant Health Summit is March 30-31, 2020 at the Lansing Center.](#)

[Having an event? Send us the details to post on the MCC Calendar of Events page!](#)

[MCC Calendar of Events](#)

The Right Treatment at the Right Time to Reduce Inequities in Breast Cancer Survival

CDC, October 2019

Although death rates from breast cancer have been going down, the trend has not been equal among all women. Looking at breast cancer survival on a population level can tell us how effective our public health and health care systems are at early diagnosis, delivery of evidence-based treatment, and management of follow-up care. In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a [series of articles on 5-year survival across several cancers](#). For breast cancer, 5-year survival for all women was high—around 90%—but survival was more than 10% lower among black women compared with white women. This difference persisted across a 10-year span, suggesting that racial inequalities still exist despite great advances in breast cancer treatment options.

Breast cancer is often diagnosed at later stages and is more aggressive in African American women. American Indian/Alaska Native women are more often diagnosed at younger ages and have worse survival after diagnosis. And, for women in rural areas, the decrease in breast cancer mortality has been slower. Many barriers contribute to these inequalities, such as lack of access to high-quality medical care, lack of transportation, mistrust of the health care system, and financial stress that can lead to delays in treatment and ultimately affect outcome. In addition, comorbidities such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease are more common among racial minorities and rural women, which may affect their ability to complete treatment.

Improving equity in breast cancer treatment and survival requires a coordinated team approach with doctors, nurses, patient navigators, and others. More efforts are needed to address the social and economic factors, as well as the comorbidities and biological characteristics that may affect outcomes. Soon after diagnosis, it is important that each patient understands her disease and treatment plan. Identifying and addressing barriers, educating patients on healthy lifestyles, and improving comorbid conditions can help women have the best opportunity to receive the cancer treatment they need.

For more information, visit the [CDC Cancer Blog](#).



When Cancer Leads to Heart Disease

Scientific American, October 2019

Heart disease and cancer are the top two causes of death in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and prevention. But cancer survivors may understand that many years after they are used, lifesaving cancer treatments—including chemotherapy and radiation therapy—can become a central issue in heart disease and, possibly, fatal heart attacks. Apart from a second cancer, heart disease is the main cause of lifetime illness and death in cancer survivors.

The good news is that with newer, innovative therapies, cancer patients are living longer. According to the American Cancer Society, there are approximately 17 million cancer survivors in the U.S. as of January 2019. This statistic means 5 percent of the nation's population (or one in 20 people) have survived cancer. The number is expected to rise to about 30 million by January 2030.

The bad news is that up to 50 percent will show some degree of heart dysfunction, or increased risk of a heart problem, within 20 years of treatment. Five percent will develop heart failure, and 40 percent will experience heart rhythm problems. The risk of death because of heart disease is eight times higher in cancer survivors as compared with the general population. Cardio-oncology is a newer and developing cardiac specialty that studies and manages these issues.

Researchers have found that in twins, an individual twin who had cancer and went through treatment has a higher risk of developing heart disease, as compared with his or her sibling—almost as high for the cancer survivor as that same person's risk of developing a second cancer.

Cancer treatment, such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, other heavy drugs or diseases—could lead to a heart not working properly in many ways. And that condition could then, in turn, lead to heart issues, including heart failure, attacks or rhythm problems, disease of the heart valves, hypertension or strokes.

It is very important for cancer patients to be educated on the risks to their heart after cancer treatments so they can work with their doctors to live heart healthy lives as cancer survivors. They need to know what to watch out for so any heart disease risk developed during treatment can be managed before it becomes a problem.

As cancer patients live longer, it is the duty of physicians within relevant specialties to learn more about survivors and how best to manage and treat them to help them have a good quality of life. Knowing more about the connections between cancer treatment and the heart in order to identify and arrest any future heart problems before they happen is crucial.

Visit the [Scientific American Website](#) to read more about cancer and heart disease.



Breast Cancer Awareness License Plates

You can support Breast Cancer screening and early detection programs by purchasing a breast cancer awareness license plate at your Michigan Secretary of State office.

The license plate features the pink ribbon, widely known as the symbol for breast cancer awareness, along with an important screening message at the bottom of the plate that reads “Early Detection Saves Lives.” A portion of the proceeds from license plate sales will go toward MDHHS’s breast and cervical cancer screening services program to help ensure that eligible women in underserved populations have access to this important, and possibly life-saving, health resource. \$25 of the \$35 fee will go towards the program when a plate is first bought and \$10 each time it’s renewed.

To purchase a plate by mail or fax, complete and print the [Breast Cancer Awareness License Plate Order Form](#). Check for the availability of a personalized Breast Cancer Awareness plate using [Plate it Your Way](#).

2020 MCC Meetings

2020 Board Meetings:

Wednesday, March 18

Wednesday, June 24

Wednesday, September 23

For more information contact Amy Stagg at StaggA@michigan.gov.

MCC Website

Be sure to visit the [MCC Website](#) to find provider and patient resources.

Health Equity Corner

November is National Native American Heritage Month

The [Indian Health Service](#) is excited to recognize National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month in November. This year’s theme, “Building Partnerships through Understanding” presents an opportunity to educate the public about the proud history of Indigenous people in America, and to celebrate the rich and diverse tribal cultures that continue to thrive throughout Indian Country.

To learn more about the Indian Health Service and on specific healthcare topics concerning American Indian and Alaska Native people, please visit the [Indian Health Services Fact Sheets](#).