



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month - Time to Focus on Good Breast Health

By *Thomas S. Chang, M.D., FACR*

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month – an ideal time to focus on good breast health. As physicians committed to improving women’s health, we at Weinstein Imaging Associates offer the following advice.

First, know the facts. Breast cancer is unfortunately a very common disease affecting one of every eight U.S. women. Most of us already know someone who has endured its consequences, both physical and mental.

The American Cancer Society recommends:

- Yearly mammograms starting at age 40. Mammography is the only screening test that has been proven to reduce your chance of dying from breast cancer.
- Breast exams by your doctor every three years in your 20s and 30s and annually over 40.

- Monthly self-breast examinations starting in your 20s. Report any changes to your doctor.

Also consider:

If you have painful breasts, have your mammogram shortly after your menstrual period, when breasts tend to be less tender. You may benefit from taking ibuprofen, naproxen or similar medication prior to your mammogram and limiting caffeine intake.

Avoid deodorants, powders and creams in your underarms and on your breasts, because they may show up on the mammogram and increase the need for additional pictures.

Be an educated consumer. Where you have your mammogram really does matter and deserves more research than shopping for your next car. Assess how quickly you can get an appointment. If additional views or biopsy is needed, can they be done quickly? Are results available before you leave? How new is the equipment? How experienced are the technologists and doctors? Is the environment comfortable and welcoming?

Talk with others about their mammogram experiences and ask for their recommendations.

Take charge of your health in October and make awareness count. ▲

Thomas S. Chang, M.D. FACR is one of four specialized radiologists at Weinstein Imaging Associates, with offices in Shadyside (412-441-1161), North Hills (412-630-2649), and South Hills (412-440-6999). weinsteinimaging.com.



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(behind Max & Erma's and near Amerifit Fitness Club)

On the web: weinsteinimaging.com

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