

PINK RIBBON GUIDE

How to Get Involved



MAMMOGRAPHY
MATTERS



**U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION**

OFFICE OF WOMEN'S HEALTH



Dear Friends,

Help us fight breast cancer by raising awareness about the importance of mammograms. Mammography is the best primary screening tool to detect breast cancer early when it is most treatable. For years, organizations across the country have helped spread the word about mammograms by joining the U.S. Food & Drug Administration Office of Women's Health Pink Ribbon Sunday Mammography Program.

Over the years, we have expanded our program's outreach to connect with as many women as possible. I am pleased to share our updated mammography resource, **Pink Ribbon Guide: Mammography Matters**.

This Pink Ribbon Guide aims to provide you with free resources and step-by-step instructions to plan, promote, launch, and evaluate Pink Ribbon mammography awareness events in your community. Follow the four simple steps outlined in the guide to communicate the importance of mammograms in fighting breast cancer.

I invite you to educate and inspire others to respond to this critical women's health issue by planning a Pink Ribbon event in your community. Your efforts can promote action, motivate others, and potentially save lives.

We would like to share the success of your Pink Ribbon events on our website and social media channels. Please email us your event stories at OWH@fda.gov.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in pink ink that reads "Kaveeta P. Vasisht".

Kaveeta P. Vasisht, M.D., Pharm.D.
Associate Commissioner for Women's Health
Director, Office of Women's Health
U.S. Food & Drug Administration



GOOD NEWS: EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Many of us know someone—a friend, mother, sister, or maybe even yourself—who has been affected by breast cancer. Approximately one in eight women in the United States will get breast cancer during their lifetime.¹ Each year, more than 40,000 women die from breast cancer.² Early detection of breast cancer can help improve a woman's chance of survival.

Although mammograms cannot prevent breast cancer, a mammogram is the best primary screening tool to find breast cancer early when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms. Women should ask their healthcare provider if and when a mammogram is right for them.³

Pink Ribbon events help educate women about the importance of mammograms and encourage them to take charge of their breast health by getting regular mammography screenings.

- Regular mammography screenings can help save lives.
- For female breast cancer, approximately 63% of cases are diagnosed at the localized stage (when the cancer is found only in the breast). The five-year survival rate at this stage is nearly 99%.⁴
- Many breast lumps are not cancerous. **See your doctor right away to be sure.**
- The FDA regulates the standards for mammography machines and training for the people who provide mammograms. Certified mammography facilities in the United States comply with the Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA). MQSA inspectors inspect mammography facilities to make sure they meet high-quality standards.

Learn more about mammography on the next page.



MAMMOGRAPHY MATTERS

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MAMMOGRAPHY

WHAT IS A MAMMOGRAM?

A mammogram is a low-dose X-ray image (picture) of the breasts. A specially trained technologist takes several images of your breasts. A radiologist then examines the images.



Nearly all mammograms in the United States are performed using digital mammography equipment. Both two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) digital mammography are currently cleared by the FDA. Women should speak with their healthcare provider to see what type of mammography is right for them.

WHERE CAN I GET A MAMMOGRAM?

Facilities that offer mammograms in the United States must meet the same high standards set by FDA.



Women with disabilities should call mammography facilities in the area to discuss their specific needs.

Women with breast implants should inform the mammography facility about their implants when making an appointment.

Find a certified mammography facility:

www.fda.gov/findmammography

WHY SHOULD I GET A MAMMOGRAM?

Mammograms are the best primary way to screen for breast cancer. They can find breast lumps that are too small for a woman or her healthcare provider to feel.



Mammograms cannot find all problems.

Call your healthcare provider if you notice any change in your breasts such as:

- A lump
- Thickening of skin
- Liquid leaking from the nipple
- Changes in how the nipple or skin looks

HOW DO I GET A MAMMOGRAM?

After deciding what type of mammogram is best for you and scheduling an appointment, keep these things in mind during and after your appointment:

DURING YOUR APPOINTMENT

- You will remove clothing above your waist and put on a gown.
- You stand in front of the X-ray machine.
- Your breast is placed on a small platform.
- A clear plastic plate presses down on your breast for a few seconds.
- Some women may find pressure on the breast uncomfortable.
- The technologist takes several X-ray images of your breast.



WHEN SHOULD I GET A MAMMOGRAM?

Regular screenings are important, and the risk of breast cancer varies by person. Ask your healthcare provider when and how often you should schedule a mammogram and what type of mammography is right for you.



AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT



A radiologist looks at the X-ray images to see if there is anything that might not be normal in your breast.



You and your healthcare provider should get written results within 30 days after your mammogram.



Call your healthcare provider if you don't get your results to ensure everything is normal.



Ask for a copy of your mammogram results. Keep it to compare with mammograms you get later.



Learn more at fda.gov/consumers/women/mammograms



Make a Difference

There are many reasons why women do not get recommended mammography screenings. They include fear, time, concerns about cost, lack of knowledge about mammography, and limited access to healthcare services.

You can help reduce some of these barriers by distributing reliable health information, providing emotional support, and connecting women to local resources. The Pink Ribbon Guide provides the information to give you the power to make a difference.

Use this guide to help inform women about the importance of mammography, to provide information and resources, and to plan Pink Ribbon events. In this guide, you will find:

- Basic facts about mammography
- A customizable flyer and postcard to promote your event
- Information on how to host an in-person or virtual event
- Resources on mammography and breast cancer

The Guide Is Easy and Fun to Implement

The steps detailed in this guide will give you the tools and resources you need to make your event a success. Go to www.fda.gov/pinkribbon to find additional resources.

Help promote mammography awareness. Start planning your Pink Ribbon event today!

JUST FOLLOW THESE 4 SIMPLE STEPS



Start Planning



Spread the Word



**Launch Your Pink
Ribbon Activity**



**Follow-Up &
Get Feedback**



STEP 1 Start Planning

Your first and most important step in planning your Pink Ribbon event is to get the support of your organization. You may also need the support of your community leaders.

- Share the facts about mammography and the importance of educating women in your community about mammography screening for breast cancer.
- Get members to commit to the event.

Once you have the support you need, it is time to begin planning. Start by forming a group of volunteers, and discuss how much time, energy, and resources to commit to your planned event. The planning group will need to decide the following:

- Date and time**
- Length of the event**
- Location (in-person or virtual)**
- Number of participants**

The planning group will also need to decide if they want to conduct simple or advanced events.



SIMPLE EVENTS

Simple events are easy to implement and require less time and resources. You may choose to do simple events if you have a limited budget.

- Use the content in this guide to customize a section about mammography resources on your organization's website.
- Share messages about mammography on your organization's social media channels. Find social media messages on our website at www.fda.gov/pinkribbon. Use popular hashtags such as **#Mammography #BreastCancer #BreastCancerAwareness #Women #WomensHealth**.
- Host a chat on social media to promote your event and mammography resources. Encourage friends, family members, and community members to discuss their breast cancer and mammography screening experiences.
- Create a custom Pink Ribbon–themed profile picture frame for members to use on social media.
- Designate a specific month, week, or day to ask your members to wear pink (dresses, hats, ties, shirts) and share their selfies on social media with popular hashtags.
- Plan and host a virtual meeting, and invite members to share their experiences with breast cancer and mammography screening.
- Provide a list of programs in your area that provide free or reduced-cost mammograms.
- Organize transportation to drive members to their mammography appointments.
- Host a community event (e.g., virtual walk, yoga class, meet-up).



ADVANCED EVENTS

Advanced events require more planning, volunteers, and resources. Advanced events may also be open to the larger community and not just your organization. You will need to account for more people and an increased demand for materials.

- Organize a visit from a mobile van that offers mammography screenings.
- Invite a guest speaker such as a breast cancer survivor, healthcare provider, or local representative from a breast cancer organization to speak in person or virtually.
- Partner with other local organizations to host a community-wide Pink Ribbon celebration.
- Conduct an outdoor community health fair, and invite local organizations and health centers to exhibit and provide information and screenings.
- Work with a local healthcare facility, health department, or nonprofit organization to hold a walk or run event to create awareness.
- Arrange for a local doctor to participate in an in-person or virtual question-and-answer session to share information about mammography and breast cancer.

Regardless of the event you choose, make sure to research the current mammography resources available in your community. There is a variety of organizations such as hospitals, health departments, and nonprofit agencies that may be able to help you do the following:

- Organize an in-person or virtual Pink Ribbon event.
- Join forces with one of their existing programs.
- Identify resources such as materials, free or low-cost screenings, and volunteers.

You may also want to plan your event to coincide with national health observances such as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October) or National Mammography Day (third Friday in October).



STEP 2 Spread the Word

If you are planning a Pink Ribbon event, there are different ways you can spread the word to your target audience. The strategy you choose will depend on the size of the group you want to attend. Consider if you want your event to be open to the public or invite-only. That will determine whether you announce your event to the entire community or reach out only to specific groups.

The following pages contain examples of materials that can be used to announce and promote your Pink Ribbon events. They are customizable materials you can use free of charge for your own events. You can also download these materials at www.fda.gov/pinkribbon.

To get your friends, family, and community involved, you can:

- Bulk print the flyer and postcard for members to distribute at local businesses or community centers.
- Share the flyer or postcard on your organization's social media channels (livestreams, groups, posts, stories, videos) or through your organization's newsletter.
- Write a blog post with details about your event, and post it on your organization's website.
- Look for community groups or calendars on social media or local websites to promote your event.





Sample Flyer

PINK RIBBON EVENT



[Event Name]

[Event Description]

[Insert Date]

[Insert Time]

[Insert Location]

[Insert Contact]

**MAMMOGRAPHY
MATTERS**





Sample Postcard

**Schedule
your next
mammogram
today.**

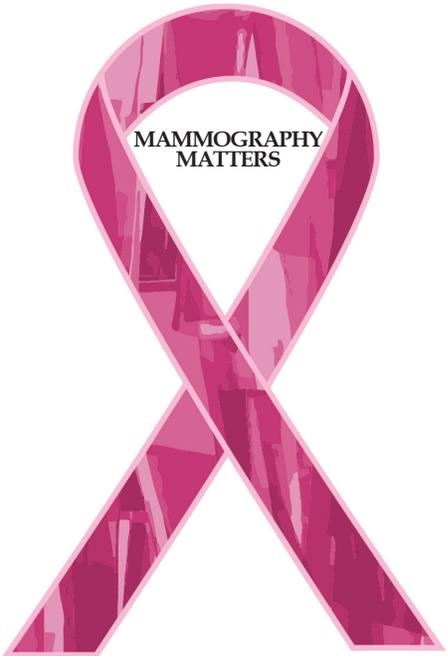



MAMMOGRAPHY MATTERS

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Mammography facilities in the United States must be certified by the Food & Drug Administration.

Find a certified mammography facility in your area:
www.fda.gov/findmammography



MAMMOGRAPHY MATTERS



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WWW.FDA.GOV/WOMENS

**STEP 3****Launch Your Pink Ribbon Event**

It is important that you start preparing in advance. The type of event you choose will determine the necessary preparations. Below is a timeline you can use to help prepare for and launch your Pink Ribbon event.

Weeks before the Event

- Get all necessary approvals for the type of event, date, time, place, and speakers. The announcements, flyers, and other materials should be approved.
- Estimate the number of participants expected to attend, and make sure you have an online platform or facility that can accommodate your event and the group size.
 - For an in-person event, arrange for a podium, platform, power source, microphone, sound system, lighting, projector, and screen, if needed. Make sure the facility and equipment have been confirmed.
 - For a virtual event, test the web platform prior to the event, and ensure all speakers and attendees have login details and all materials to be shared as intended. It can be helpful to set up a test a few days before the actual event. Encourage attendees to sign in early on the day of the event.
- Create a checklist of event tasks and responsibilities. Identify volunteers and assign them specific responsibilities. Have backup volunteers available in case of an emergency. Create a contact sheet with emails and phone numbers of volunteers so you can stay in touch as needed during the planning process.
- Ensure that you have mammography resources prepared for distribution. Download or order free materials on our website at www.fda.gov/pinkribbon.



Days before the Event

- Review and update your checklist of event tasks and responsibilities. Confirm volunteers and their specific responsibilities.
- Get approval from attendees to have their photos taken during the event and posted on your social media channels. Print or send a photo release form to attendees and guest speakers in advance and/or have the form ready when attendees sign in at the event.
- Have guest speakers send a copy of their presentation.
- If hosting an in-person event outdoors, check the weather a few days prior to your event and consider an alternate option for inclement weather.
- Confirm outside participants (e.g., healthcare providers, sponsors, mammography van, and media) and their roles in the event.
- Designate a person to provide information and answer questions about the event for attendees and media.

Day of the Event

- Take photos of the event so you can post them on social media. Make sure to get approval from attendees before posting their photos. Encourage those who attend to share their photos, experiences, and/or what they learned on their social media channels with popular hashtags such as **#Mammography #BreastCancer #BreastCancerAwareness #Women #WomensHealth**. Tag your organization and/or hosts.
- Have your checklist handy so you can stay on track. Periodically check in with volunteers to ensure everything is running smoothly.
- Most importantly, be excited! Your planning has paid off, and your event is happening.

Find sample social media messages and graphics to help promote your event on our website at www.fda.gov/pinkribbon.

**STEP 4**

Follow Up and Get Feedback

Follow-up after the event is important. You should take note of how attendees felt about the event, how smoothly the planning went, and which promotional tools and activities were most effective.

Conducting the appropriate follow-up can help you not only evaluate the success of your event but also plan, efficiently organize, and implement future events.

Keep Track of Your Successes

- Count the number of people who attended your event. Create a sign-in sheet or conduct a roll call to determine the number of attendees.
- Document the number of materials you distributed.
- If hosting an online event, keep track of website, newsletter, and/or social media metrics. These metrics can include number of visitors, click-through rates, likes, retweets, and so on.
- Track how many women had a mammogram at your event if this service was offered.
- Hold a post-event meeting with the planning committee to reflect on lessons learned.
- Post photos of the event on your organization's social media channels.
- Compile the names and contact information for guest speakers and other individuals who assisted with your events. They may be able to help you with future events.
- Email a recap of your event to **OWH@FDA.GOV**. We may want to share the success of your event with others.

Acknowledge attendee, volunteer, and partner participation with an electronic thank you note, and offer follow-up resources and information to foster sharing the Pink Ribbon Guide long after the event. Encourage Pink Ribbon participants to continue to have regular mammograms and provide support to participants who may be diagnosed with breast cancer.



Provide Ongoing Support

Here are some ways you can help keep your community motivated and empowered.

- Create a carpool to help your members get to their mammogram appointments.
- Start a support group facilitated by licensed, trained professionals for women who are diagnosed with or have survived breast cancer.
- Create a buddy system to provide support to women undergoing breast cancer treatment. That could include walking their dog, going grocery shopping, or just spending time with them.
- Hold follow-up events throughout the year to continue to raise awareness about mammography.
- Include men and children in your events. Breast cancer affects the entire family, not just the person with the disease.



Resources from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA)

It is critical that your Pink Ribbon event help point women in the right direction for breast cancer information and mammography services. You should identify local resources that can provide a wide range of materials and support, including managed care organizations, clinics, local hospitals, local health departments, and cancer centers.

- **FDA-Certified Mammography Facilities:** www.fda.gov/findmammography
- **Mammography: What You Need to Know:** <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/mammography-what-you-need-know>
- **Frequently Asked Questions about MQSA:** <https://www.fda.gov/radiation-emitting-products/consumer-information-mqsa/frequently-asked-questions-about-mqsa#top>
- **FDA Office of Women's Health (OWH):** www.fda.gov/womens
 - Download Pink Ribbon Guide flyers, outreach cards, and other resources: www.fda.gov/pinkribbon
 - Download or order in bulk free women's health publications in English and Spanish: www.fda.gov/womenshealthpubs
 - Download publications in other languages: <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/free-publications-women/publications-other-languages>

Additional Resources

The following federal government agencies and organizations also provide information on mammography and breast cancer.

- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)** – Learn about free or low-cost mammography services: www.hrsa.gov/gethealthcare/affordable/index.html
- **National Cancer Institute (NCI)** – Get information on breast cancer screening and treatment: www.cancer.gov/types/breast, or call 1-800-4-CANCER
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** – Find statistics and other information on breast cancer: www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast, or call 1-888-842-6355



U.S. Food & Drug Administration Office of Women's Health

10903 New Hampshire Avenue, WO32 2333

Silver Spring, MD 20993

301-796-9440

Email: OWH@FDA.gov

www.fda.gov/womens

References

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/young_women/bringyourbrave/breast_cancer_young_women/index.htm

² <https://www.cancer.gov/types/common-cancers>

³ https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/screening.htm

⁴ <https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/breast.html>



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