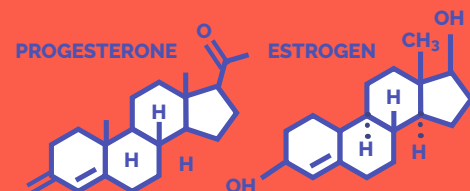


# Hormones and Breast Cancer Risk: What's the Connection?

How hormonal changes affect your breast cancer risk



**FACT:** Over **75%** of women with breast cancer have no family history of the disease.



## Did you know?

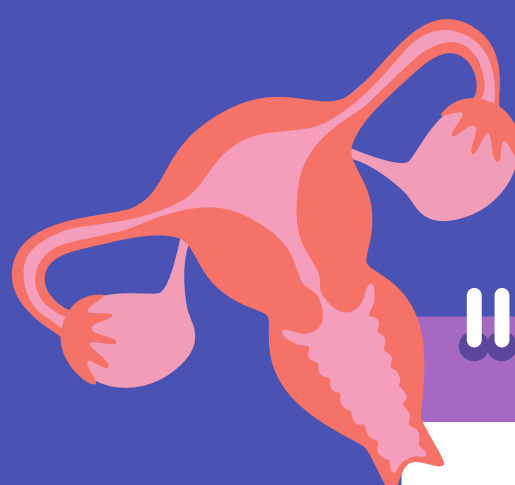
Breast cancer risk is associated with exposure to hormones (estrogen and progesterone) produced in a woman's ovaries. The longer a woman is exposed to hormones produced by her body, the greater the risk of breast cancer.



About **1 in 8** U.S. women will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of their lifetime.

## Reproductive factors that increase breast cancer risk include:

- ✓ Early menstruation (before age 12)
- ✓ Late menopause (after age 55)
- ✓ Never giving birth

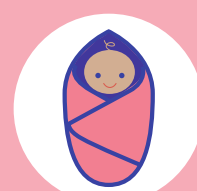
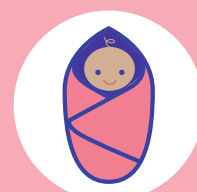
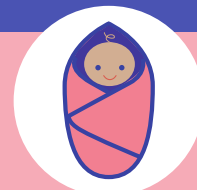


## What reduces breast cancer risk?

- ✓ First pregnancy at an early age
- ✓ Each additional pregnancy (the more you have, the lower your risk)
- ✓ Breastfeeding for at least a year

## Pregnancy and breast cancer risk

Both pregnancy and breastfeeding reduce breast cancer risk because they lower the number of menstrual cycles (hormone exposure) a woman will have in her lifetime. But different pregnancy circumstances can raise or lower breast cancer risk.



## What raises breast cancer risk?

- ✓ First pregnancy at an older age
- ✓ Recent childbirth (temporary increase that declines after about 10 years)

**Increased exposure to hormones** = **Increased breast cancer risk**



## Birth control and breast cancer risk

There is some evidence that hormonal contraceptives like the pill increase breast cancer risk, but overall, risk of breast cancer among birth control users is low.

Hormonal contraceptives are linked to a lower risk of ovarian, endometrial and colon cancers.

## Hormone replacement therapy and breast cancer risk

There are two kinds of HRT:

- ✓ Combination estrogen and progesterone
- ✓ Estrogen-only

Recent research indicates that combination HRT increases breast cancer risk significantly, while estrogen-only HRT doesn't increase risk unless it's used for more than 10 years.

Breast cancer risk goes back down to average about 2 years after stopping combination HRT.