



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Early detection of breast and cervical cancer improves chances of long-term survival

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Some women have a concern about what their chance of living will be if they are found to have breast or cervical cancer. Research, however, has proven that with early detection patients may have an over 90 percent chance of long-term survival.

Each year in the United States, thousands of women are diagnosed with breast and cervical cancers. This year in Alabama, the number of cases combined are expected to total nearly 3,000 women. Over 600 women are expected to die from these diseases.

During April, National Cancer Awareness Month, the Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program is placing special emphasis on the importance of screening and early detection in women who have never or rarely been screened for breast or cervical cancer.

“The American Cancer Society recommends that women ages 20-39 get a clinical breast exam every three years, and women ages 40 and older get a clinical breast exam and mammogram every year,” says Viki Brant, director of the Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

“Women age 18 or older or sexually active should receive a Pap smear and pelvic exam every year. After three or more consecutive normal results, the test may be done less often at the physician’s discretion.”

The Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program is a program of the Alabama Department of Public Health that provides free breast and cervical exams to uninsured or underinsured women ages 40 and older who meet income guidelines. Since the program began in 1996, nearly 19,000 women in Alabama have been screened and 315 cancers have been detected.

Women who qualify for the program receive a clinical breast exam, pelvic exam, Pap smear, mammogram, if age 50 or older, and if indicated, some diagnostic services. If during the course of screening and diagnostic proceedings cancer is discovered, Medicaid services may be available to cover treatment costs.

For information about enrollment in this program call toll free: 1-877-252-3324. For other information about breast and cervical cancer or reduced cost mammograms, call one of the following toll-free numbers below:

1-800-ACS-2345	American Cancer Society
1-800-I'M AWARE	The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
1-800-4-CANCER	National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service
1-800-332-8615	TTY - National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service
1-800-719-9154	National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations (NABCO)
1-800-221-2141	Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization

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