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Breast cancer care expands

New treatments, clinics bring advanced care closer to Canyon County residents

CANYON COUNTY — More women in Idaho skip their yearly mammogram than in any other state, government data shows. But one out of eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and if caught early, it's curable 95 percent of the time.

In Idaho, 28 percent of breast cancer patients won't catch it an an early stage, said Jill Winschell, a breast cancer nurse navigator for St. Luke's.

Many insurance plans will cover mammogram check-ups, which only take about 30 minutes, Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center Site Coordinator Tammy Patton said.



Glenda Johnson, of Homedale, was diagnosed with stage 4 inflammatory breast cancer in June, spreading to her liver, hip and neck. Every three weeks, Johnson travels to Saint Alphonsus Caldwell Cancer Center for chemotherapy treatment. After chemotherapy, Johnson will undergo surgery and radiation treatment.

As Canyon County's population grows, so do breast cancer prevention and treatment options, making it easier and more convenient for people to prevent and cure the disease.

Digital mammography, for example, offers clearer results and a more comfortable experience for patients and catches tumors sooner. Some clinics offer massage and acupressure therapy. Nurse navigators are available to help guide patients through the care process and financial aspects.

"When you go through these treatments, you still have to pay your bills," Saint Alphonsus breast cancer patient Glenda Johnson, of Homedale, said. She said she's thankful for her nurses help in that area, as well as their friendly and fun attitudes that make her laugh when she comes in the Caldwell Cancer Care Center for her chemotherapy every three weeks.

Patients across the county not only receive physical care, but mental, emotional and spiritual care.

Massage and acupuncture, for instance, help relieve nausea, pain, fatigue, muscle tension and anxiety, St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute Integrative Medicine Coordinator Kamron Keep said. Here's a look at breast cancer care options in Canyon County:

Saint Alphonsus

Nampa Cancer Care Center, on East Hawaii Avenue near main hospital campus, 1512 12th Ave. Road

Provides state-of-the-art technology and chemotherapy, including clinical trials, which treat patients with new medicines and combinations of medicines.

Caldwell Cancer Care Center, 3123 Medical Dr.

Provides radiation, chemotherapy, advanced imaging, nutrition and exercise therapies. Partnered with West Valley Medical Center.

Breast Care Center, Nampa Health Plaza, 4400 E. Flamingo, Suite 301

Encompasses digital mammography, ultrasound, biopsy, onsite radiology, bone density. Offers nurse navigator services.

West Valley Medical Center

Imaging Services area and Women's Imaging Center, Caldwell, 1717 Arlington Ave.

Diagnostic tools include general diagnostic X-ray, fluoroscopy, CT, ultrasound, MRI, nuclear medicine, digital mammography, bone densitometry and advanced imaging procedures. A high-risk calculator screens mammogram patients for higher risk due to family history or other factors that influence breast health. Center provides nurse navigator services and a spa-like environment.

St. Luke's

Mountain States Tumor Institute, Nampa, 308 East Hawaii Ave.

Treats approximately 25 percent of Idaho breast care patients, MSTI Senior Marketing Coordinator Cindy Graham said.

Services include medical oncology, chemotherapy, radiation oncology, radiation therapy, lab work, genetic testing and counselors for tumor types that are hereditary, an oncology dietitian, patient-financial advocate and research nurses that help identify access to clinical trials.

The radiation therapy technology — linear accelerator — includes image guided radiation therapy that provides more exact treatment to the tumor while preventing damage to normal tissue.

Acupuncture, massage, Reiki (Japanese stress-reduction technique) and a monthly relaxation class are also available.

Breast Care Detection Center, Caldwell, 229 East Logan

Most of St. Luke's eight Breast Care Detection Centers across the state offer full-field digital mammography.

Mobile Mammography Coach

Provides full field digital mammography.