



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast screenings are an important part of preventive care.

At Independence Blue Cross (IBX), we care about more than your medical conditions. We want you to have the tools and support you need to stay healthy in every way.

Breast cancer can affect people of any gender at different stages of life. Paying attention to changes and keeping up with recommended screenings can help support early detection.

Breast cancer gets more common as we age

Breast cancer is more often diagnosed in older adults. Many people who are diagnosed are over age 65. As we get older, being aware of our risk and keeping up with recommended screenings becomes more important.

Factors that increase our risk

In addition to being over age 65, some other factors can also make breast cancer more likely. These include:

- Having a close family member who has had breast cancer
- Having had breast cancer or certain other breast problems before
- Changes in hormone levels over time

Many people have one or more of these risk factors and never develop breast cancer. A health care provider can help you understand your personal risk level and which screenings make sense.

See the other side for information about support available through your health plan.

Questions about breast cancer?



Our Registered Nurse Health Coaches are here to help. Our members can call **1-855-332-3102 (TTY/TDD: 711)** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Symptoms to watch out for

Breast changes are not always a sign of cancer. Still, it's a good idea to talk with your provider if you notice:

- A new lump or thickening in the breast or underarm
- Changes in breast size or shape
- Skin changes, like dimpling or redness
- Nipple changes or discharge

Telling your health care provider about these changes early can help them decide if follow-up care is needed.

Independence 

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Breast cancer screenings matter

For many people over age 65, breast cancer screening continues to be an important part of preventive care. How often screening is recommended can vary based on a person's overall health, medical history, and personal risk factors. A health care provider can help you decide what screening schedule makes sense for you.

There are different ways to evaluate your breast health. These can include:

- Mammograms, which are X-ray pictures of the breast
- Other imaging tests when appropriate

When a preventive screening turns into a diagnostic visit

Sometimes a screening mammogram shows an area that needs a closer look. This does not mean someone has cancer.

Depending on what your mammogram shows, your provider may recommend more imaging or, in some cases, a biopsy to better understand what's going on. These follow-up steps are common and are meant to provide clear answers. Talking with your provider about what to expect can help reduce worry and stress.

Covered preventive care for Medicare Advantage members

Members of Medicare Advantage plans from IBX are covered for annual wellness visits and many preventive screenings. This includes mammograms when you use in-network providers. If a preventive screening turns into a diagnostic visit, cost-sharing may apply.

For assistance locating in-network primary care providers and mammography centers, visit ibxmedicare.com/providerfinder.

And if you have questions about breast cancer, IBX Registered Nurse Health Coaches will be happy to answer them. Call **1-800-688-1911** (TTY/TDD: **711**) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Taking care of your breast health

Staying informed, being aware of certain changes, and keeping up with preventive care are meaningful steps you can take to help manage your breast cancer risk. Your health care provider is a key partner in helping you make decisions that support your health and well being.

Your health matters. And we never stop caring.

Independence Blue Cross offers PPO, HMO-POS, and HMO Medicare Advantage plans with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Independence Blue Cross PPO, HMO-POS, and HMO Medicare Advantage plans depends on contract renewal.

Independence Blue Cross offers products through its subsidiaries and affiliates including Independence Assurance Company, Independence Hospital Indemnity Plan, Keystone Health Plan East and QCC Insurance Company — independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



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