



‘Woman in the Mirror’

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May 9 Event at Atrium Hotel Looks at Reducing Breast Cancer Risk

ALTON – Busy women can learn ways to reduce their risk of breast cancer at the “Woman in the Mirror” event on Saturday, May 9, at the Atrium Hotel and Conference Center (formerly the Holiday Inn), 3800 E. Homer Adams Parkway. Valerie McDougler of the Bread of Life Fellowship Church coordinates the event.

The program begins at 1 p.m. and includes lunch, a fashion show sponsored by CATO Corporations of Alton, shopping, door prizes, and two guest speakers. Dr. Nikol McDonald of the Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation will discuss the importance of the “Early Detection Connection.” Pastor Miki King will deliver an empowering message, “Work Your Life”

Tickets are \$20. Call Valerie McDougler at 618-465-2804 to reserve your seat.

Alton Memorial Hospital was recently awarded a grant in the amount of \$24,976 to establish the “Early Detection Connection,” a program to remind women of the importance of clinical breast exams and mammograms. The grant was made possible by the Carolyn Adams Ticket for the Cure, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Office of Women’s Health and Family Services.

Here are some quick guidelines for maintaining excellent breast health, based on information from the American Cancer Society:

- **If you are in your 20s:** Get a clinical breast exam at least once every three years. This can be performed by your OB/GYN, or call Alton Memorial Hospital at 618-463-7750 to find out when the next free screening is scheduled.
- **If you are in your 30s:** Keep getting those clinical breast exams at least once every three years. If you have a family history of breast cancer -- especially in a close relative like a parent or sibling -- talk to your doctor about when you should start getting regular mammograms.
- **If you are in your 40s:** The ACS recommends that women get a yearly mammogram starting at age 40. Clinical exams should now be yearly as well.
- **If you are 50 and over:** Continue to get both a mammogram and clinical breast exam annually for the rest of your life.

Lifestyle changes have been shown in studies to decrease breast cancer risk, even in high-risk women. The Mayo Clinic has provided the following tips for reducing your risk of breast cancer:

- **Limit alcohol.** The more alcohol you drink, the greater your risk of developing breast cancer.

- **Don't smoke.** Not smoking is one of the best things you can do for your overall health.
- **Control your weight.** Being overweight increases the risk of breast cancer.
- **Be physically active.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight, which, in turn, helps prevent breast cancer.
- **Breast-feed.** Breast-feeding may play a role in breast cancer prevention. The longer you breast-feed, the greater the protective effect.
- Limit dose and duration of hormone therapy. Combination hormone therapy for more than three to five years increases the risk of breast cancer.
- Avoid exposure to radiation and environmental pollution.

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Dr. Nikol McDonald