

Breast cancer disparities for African-American women are startling. Breast cancer mortality is nearly 42 percent higher in the U.S. for African-American women than Caucasian women. And, African-American women are often diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer when treatment options are limited, costly and the prognosis is poor. Susan G. Komen® believes this is unacceptable and is working to change these outcomes.

See more here:

- [Ending Breast Cancer Disparities to Achieve Health Equity for All](#)
- [Breast Cancer Statistics](#)
- [Race and Ethnicity](#)
- [Comparing Breast Cancer Screening Rates](#)
- [Komen Educational Materials for African-Americans](#)
- [Breast Cancer Education Toolkits – Black and African-American Communities](#)

## Incidence

- An estimated 30,700 new cases of breast cancer were expected to occur among black women in 2016 (most current data available). <sup>1p4</sup>
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among black women. <sup>1p10</sup>
- Overall breast cancer incidence among black women is lower than in white women in the U.S. <sup>3</sup> However, black women have a higher breast cancer incidence rate than white women before age 40. <sup>2p4</sup>
- One in 9 black women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. <sup>1p3</sup>
- The median age of diagnosis is 59 years old for black women, compared to 63 years old for white women. <sup>2p3</sup>
- Aggressive tumor characteristics are more common in breast cancers diagnosed in black women than other racial/ethnic groups. Twenty-four percent of breast cancers in black women are referred to as triple negative compared to 8-12 percent of those among women of other races/ethnicities in the U.S. Premenopausal black women appear to be at particular risk of triple negative breast cancer; an aggressive type of breast cancer associated with shorter survival. <sup>2p5</sup>

## Mortality

- An estimated 6,310 deaths from breast cancer were expected to occur among black women in 2016. <sup>1p12</sup>
- Breast cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death among black women, exceeded only by lung cancer in the U.S. <sup>1p12</sup>
- Breast cancer mortality is nearly 42 percent higher in black women than in white women in the U.S. <sup>1p12</sup>

**Note:** To make this statement more evergreen and perhaps easier to recall, it is acceptable to say “mortality was more than 40 percent. . .etc.”



## Specific Populations and Breast Cancer Black and African-Americans

### Survival

- The overall 5-year relative survival rate for breast cancer diagnosed in 1975-2013 among black women was 83 percent, compared to 92 percent among white women; this difference may be attributed to a later stage at diagnosis, poorer stage-specific survival and higher rates of aggressive, triple negative breast cancer among black women.<sup>2p10</sup>

**Note:** Survival rates are based on patients diagnosed between 2007-2013 and followed through 2014.

- About 55 percent of all breast cancers among black women are diagnosed at a local stage, compared to 65 percent among white women.<sup>2p11</sup>
- Possible reasons for lower survival of black women compared to white women include biologic and genetic differences in tumors, prevalence of risk factors, unequal access to and receipt of prompt, high-quality treatment, reproductive patterns and later stage of breast cancer at diagnosis.<sup>1p12</sup>

### Screening

- Despite generally similar screening rates, breast cancer is detected at an advanced stage more often in black than in white women. This difference has been largely attributed to longer intervals between mammograms and lack of timely follow-up of suspicious results.<sup>1p12</sup>

**Note:** The terms African-American, black and white and are used in different statements listed above. These are the terms that were used in the references that informed the statements.

<sup>1</sup> *Cancer Facts and Figures for African-Americans*, 2016-2018, ACS

<sup>2</sup> *Breast Cancer Facts and Figures*, 2017-2018, ACS

<sup>3</sup> *SEER, Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2013. Table 1.12, 2016*