

**Cancer Awareness Month**

# Black Women are 40 Percent More Likely to Die from Breast Cancer than White Women

## 'Know Your Girls' aims to educate Black women about their breast cancer risk to address disparities

NEW YORK – Black women in the U.S. are 40 percent more likely to die from breast cancer than White women, and a recent study found that while 92 percent of Black women agree breast health is important, only 25 percent of women have recently discussed breast health with their family, friends, or colleagues and only 17 percent have taken steps to understand their risk for breast cancer. To address the disparity in breast cancer mortality rates, Susan G. Komen and the Ad Council launched Know Your Girls, a national campaign to educate and inspire Black women to understand their risk for breast cancer and take charge of their breast health.

Black women are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer younger, at later stages and with more aggressive forms of the disease, limiting treatment options.

"As a breast cancer survivor who lost her mother to breast cancer, I understand all too well the pain and heartbreak of this disease," said Paula Schneider, President and CEO of Susan G. Komen. "We hope this campaign empowers Black women to learn about breast cancer risk and the resources available to take action."

The Know Your Girls campaign encourages Black women, ages 30-55 years old, to treat their breasts with the same attentiveness and understanding they share with

the women in their lives. "The Know Your Girls campaign introduces breast cancer education through a celebration of the powerful sisterhood between Black women," said Lisa Sherman, President and CEO of the Ad Council. "Instead of focusing on fear, the campaign provides tools and information that can help Black women feel ownership around their breast health and encourages the sharing of those resources and messages with the women who support them throughout their lives."

The campaign video, created pro bono by award-winning creative agency Translation, features vignettes of a woman at key moments throughout her life. At each occasion, she is surrounded by her girls, the friends and family who have always been her source of support and strength. At the end, the woman reveals that the "girls" who have been with her in every single moment of her life, her breasts, are in fact the ones she might know the least.

"The staggering breast cancer mortality rates amongst women of color – amongst Black women – is unacceptable," said Steve Stoute, Founder and CEO of Translation. "Breast cancer has touched so many of our loved ones, our peers, and our neighbors, including my wife who lost her dear sister to this crippling disease. Creating a healthy dialogue between women of col-

or, their fears, and their breasts is a critical step towards eradication. This campaign aims to do just that, while speaking directly to her inner conscious."

The campaign includes TV, radio, print, out-of-home, and digital PSAs which direct women to KnowYourGirls.org. The website features resources that help women navigate breast cancer risk factors, recognize changes in their own breasts, and prepare to have a conversation with a doctor.

The campaign also includes social media channels, launched in collaboration with digital marketing agency Good Stuff Digital, that aim to create an online community where Black women can come together to talk honestly and openly about their breast health and show support for their sisters.

The Know Your Girls campaign will help Susan G. Komen work to achieve their Bold Goal to reduce the current 40,000 annual breast cancer deaths by 50 percent in the U.S. by 2026.

Through their African American Health Equity Initiative, Komen is already working to reduce the mortality gap between Black women and White women by 25 percent, focusing first on the 10 cities where mortality rates and late-stage diagnosis of Black women are highest: Memphis, St. Louis, Long Beach/Los Angeles Metro Area, Dallas/Fort Worth/Arlington Metro Area, Virginia



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Beach, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia. In some cities, the disparity in breast cancer mortality rate between Black and White women is as high as 74%.

The Know Your Girls PSAs were directed by A.V. Rockwell, who has created short films like Feathers and The Gospel, and include singer Alicia Keys' hit song "You Don't Know My Name." To amplify its message, the campaign is partnering with Coming to America actress and breast cancer survivor Vanessa Bell Calloway, who provides

the voiceover for the PSAs, celebrity stylist June Ambrose, actress and comedian Regina Hall, E! News co-anchor Zuri Hall, and others.

Facebook and WWE have both signed on to support the campaign through global media assets.

"The Susan G Komen #KnowYourGirls campaign is not only hip, youthful, and timely, but it's essentially very important for all women, young and mature," said actress and breast cancer survivor Vanessa Bell Calloway. "I'm so happy to be a part of this

important campaign, because, as a breast cancer survivor, I understand firsthand how important it is to know your girls, literally and figuratively. Being in tune with your girls can save your life. Know Your Girls can also mean know your real-life girlfriends and, as a community of women, help remind each other about the importance of breast health."

To learn more about the campaign, visit KnowYourGirls.org or join the conversation using #KnowYourGirls on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

## Breast Cancer Survivors, Who Lose Muscle Mass, Can Benefit From Strength Training, Studies Suggest

By Lynn Panton and Ashley Artese  
For The Conversation

Breast cancer research has resulted in treatment that has greatly improved survival rates. As a result, there are 3.1 million breast cancer survivors alive in the United States today. The five-year survival rate is about 90 percent. This is great news.

But, survivors are still left to struggle with many adverse side effects from the disease and cancer treatments, which include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and hormonal suppression drugs that are used to suppress hormones that may have fueled the breast cancer.

Particularly worrisome side effects are accelerated losses in bone mineral density and muscle mass – with gains

in fat mass. These changes can lead to osteoporosis and fractures, as well as lower strength, decreases in physical function, and becoming overweight and obese, which can lead to poorer survival rates.

These side effects can ultimately reduce overall quality of life and increase the risk for chronic disease and disability in breast cancer survivors.

Over the last 10 years, our laboratory has been evaluating the effects of exercise interventions, specifically resistance-type exercise on muscle mass, fat mass, bone mineral density, strength, physical function and quality of life in breast cancer survivors.

**Survivors, already tough, get tougher**

See **CANCER** on page 11

susan g. komen.  
OREGON AND SW WASHINGTON

**Take Charge of Your Breast Health**

**GET SCREENED**

Save the Date

**bc**i **2019 REGIONAL BREAST CANCER ISSUES CONFERENCE**

A conference for breast cancer survivors, fighters, caregivers, and health professionals that covers emerging research and treatment options, risk reduction, and quality of life issues.

**March 16, 2019**

komenoregon.org