BREAST CANCER IN THE AMERICAS

KEY MESSAGES

Breast cancer is the most common cancer and the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the Americas.

Earlier diagnosis coupled with advances in treatment have led to better outcomes for women with breast cancer.

Breast cancer incidence rates in Northern America are twice as high as those in Central America. Yet, the mortality rates are similar, highlighting the differences in access to treatment.

Comprehensive breast cancer prevention and control programs are essential to reduce the burden of the disease.

Better health outcomes are attained with earlier diagnosis.

Health education can improve awareness and understanding among women about the importance of breast cancer screening and seeking care.

While the causes of breast cancer remain largely unknown, factors that can increase breast cancer risk include: family history, early age at menarche, late age at first childbirth, hormone use, obesity, and alcohol.

Early detection, accurate diagnosis, and timely treatment are needed to control breast cancer.

High-quality mammography screening, linked to timely treatment have led to better outcomes for women with breast cancer.

WOMEN AFFECTED

Each year in the Americas

More than 491,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer.

Approximately 106,391 women die from this disease.

By 2040

+39% increase in number of women diagnosed

684,174 cases (+39.1%)

162,044 deaths (+52.3%)

Latin America and the Caribbean

A greater proportion of breast cancer deaths occur in women under 65 years of age in Latin America and the Caribbean (50%) as compared to North America (37%).

PAHO

Pan American Health Organization

World Health Organization Region of the Americas
Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families, and may also positively influence the course of illness. It can meet the psychosocial, spiritual and supportive care needs of women with breast cancer.

PAHO/WHO promotes a comprehensive approach to breast cancer prevention and control, including education, screening and early detection, diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care.

Data source: GLOBOCAN, 2018

KEY ACTIONS BY PAHO

PAHO is working with its Member States to mount and sustain comprehensive cancer control programs that include breast cancer.

- **Advocacy and communication** to raise the priority of breast cancer on the public health agenda, as well as to improve awareness and understanding of the burden of this disease among women, their families, and communities.

- **Technical assistance** to improve the quality and access to mammography services, and training of mammography personnel.

- **Promotion of evidence-based guidelines**, stratified according to available resources, for screening, diagnosis, and treatment.

- **Improving quality and access to radiotherapy services** and strengthening capacity for cancer treatment in the region.

- **Integrating breast health awareness within primary care services**.

For more information:

www.paho.org/cancer