

well-being

KNOW YOUR GENES

Story | SUE HAUSTEIN

When we were growing up, the most frightening health concern our parents' generation faced, was the "Big C." Back then, cancer was feared as a death sentence.

We've come a long way, baby!

While many cancers are still life threatening, diagnostic tools have evolved to such a degree that the majority of cancers can be treated successfully, if discovered in time.

While it should be noted that not all breast changes, such as lumps, indicate cancer, variations in the breast should be reported to a doctor immediately. Should you find yourself in the position of having a positive diagnosis, put on your sunglasses, the future's looking bright.

According to Dr. Nadya Hasham-Jiwa, a Houston-based medical oncologist, early detection of breast cancer with screening mammograms allow for a woman's best chance for cure.

"Even more exciting is that state-of-the art therapy for early stage or locally advanced breast cancer is readily available in our community. At Memorial Hermann Southeast, we have a team of physicians who specialize in breast cancer treatment. They can address all aspects of its management, from surgery, radiation and chemotherapy, to hormonal therapy, nutrition and emotional support, to our ultimate goal of a cure," she says.

Breast cancer treatment involves a multidisciplinary approach, including collaboration between the oncologist, surgeon and radiation oncologist, Dr. Hasham-Jiwa adds.

"The treatment plan is specifically tailored for each woman, who also plays an important role in finalizing her therapy. Therefore, your understanding of the disease and therapies is crucial. Choose a cancer doctor you can relate to and trust."

There is effective therapy for breast cancer. Survival for early stage disease is very optimistic and advanced disease is also quite treatable. Early detection may translate to cure, but advanced disease also warrants state of the art therapy. Discuss options with your oncologist as every situation is unique and deserves individual attention and planning.

Annual screenings and mammograms are de rigeur for women over the age of 40. If detected in the earliest stages, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer is 100 percent.

When it comes to technology, the new generation of brachytherapy applicators targets radiation directly to the tissue of concern. Newer technologies in breast cancer treatment include a procedure that involves a small balloon device surgically inserted into the patient's breast. Rather than irradiating the entire breast, this technology minimizes radiation close to healthy tissue. The patient receives radiation treatment twice a day for five days decreasing the length of treatment by five or six weeks. The catheter is surgically removed after the treatment is completed.

Successful breast cancer treatment, however, isn't limited only to technology. Emotional and social support are crucial factors.

"At our facility, emotional support during the entire course of each patient's treatment is stressed," says Kyle Price, administrative director at Memorial Hermann-Southeast. "Nutritionists and social workers support the physicians and nurses, assisting patients through recovery and healing."

Price also notes unique radiation treatment options, including Contura, which involves a five-day breast cancer treatment, as compared to six to seven weeks of treatment.

"Believe it or not, we are finding women all the time who don't realize the importance of yearly mammograms and self-exams. They think mammograms are too painful," he says. "Despite all the education and awareness around breast cancer and mammography, there is still a lot of educating to do."

DID YOU KNOW?

Although the disease is much less common among males, men are susceptible to breast cancer. In fact, nearly 2,000 men are diagnosed with the disease each year.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Second to lung cancer as the leading cause of cancer death in this country, statistics show that breast cancer will affect one of every eight American women in their lifetime. In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, a number of fundraising efforts have been planned to benefit breast cancer research and education. From galas and golf tournaments to marathon walks and runs, get involved and do your part to help eradicate this disease.

SEPT. 13

Tour de Pink 2009

Benefiting the Pink Ribbons Project, this is the first bike ride in Texas solely benefiting breast cancer. Prairie View A&M University, 5th Street Ave. A.L.W. Minor St. 7 a.m. Starting at \$25. 713-524-7465, tourdepink.org

OCT. 1-31

CRAVE Cupcakes' Breast Cancer Awareness Month

CRAVE will donate 100 percent of proceeds from their pink ribbon cupcakes to the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center at Baylor College of Medicine. Six for \$19.50. 1151 Uptown Park Blvd. \$19.50. 713-622-7283, cravecupcakes.com



OCT. 3

2009 Komen Houston Race for the Cure

More than 30,000 people are expected to participate in this certified USATF 5K (3.1-mile) course with running and walking events. Allen Parkway pedestrian bridge. 7:45 a.m. Starting at \$35. 713-783-9188, komen-houston.org

OCT. 26

Fort Bend Pink Ladies Golf Tournament

Held each year at the Sweetwater Country Club, golf lovers will hit the links and spend the day having fun, sipping champagne and swinging for a cure. 4400 Palm Royale Blvd., Sugar Land. Call for time and prices. 713-706-5635

OCT. 29-30

Breast Health Summit

Presented by the Breast Health Collaborative of Texas, this two-day statewide summit is open to anyone with an interest in breast health. Registration required. United Way of Texas, 50 Waugh Drive. 4 p.m. 281-464-5117, the-rose.org



beauty

FIGHTING THE WRINKLE WAR

Story | SALLY J. CLASEN

Let's face it, we're all trying to combat the signs of aging—and some of us are in more of a hurry than others to do war. In defense, the multi-billion dollar skin care market is brimming with non-prescription anti-wrinkle creams that promise a youthful glow. Do they really work?

Findings from a 2006 Consumer Report study suggest over-the-counter wrinkle cream, from the inexpensive to the priciest, can't turn back time. Researchers tested products ranging from \$38 to \$335 and concluded the wrinkle creams only offered a slight improvement in the skin's appearance, depending on length used and active ingredients, but no permanent age reversal. If there are cracks in the effectiveness of the anti-wrinkle market, it hasn't stopped the demand for facelifts in a jar, particularly for luxury brands.

Here are two high-end products aggressively marketed to buyers as weapons against aging:

StriVectin-SD (\$135 for 6 oz.) was first successfully sold to decrease scarring and

stretch marks but by accident as become a popular anti-aging treatment for wrinkles, fine lines and crow's feet. The primary active ingredient found in the original StriVectin formula is a peptide complex called "Pal-KTTKS." With its combination of skin firming agents, skin hydrators and elasticizers, the cream has been shown to increase collagen and reduce wrinkles by as much as 68 percent. In the Consumer Reports study, StriVectin-SD Intensive Concentrate earned an unattractive seventh place spot out of 10 but finished first in a blind study of anti-aging creams.

Another choice, Prescriptive Intensive Rebuilding Moisturizer, was featured on Oprah as a wrinkle cure worth its upscale container. At \$95 for 2 oz., the claim is that the cream's "build and fill" technology works from the inside out to strengthen, firm and lift while rejuvenating the outer layer of the skin to decrease surface lines and wrinkles. The Hydrabuild complex helps stimulate natural glycosaminoglycans production to maximize abundance of hyaluronic acid and water in the skin, which promotes firmness.



HAUTE WAX

This summer, European Wax Centers hosted "Skin," a French-themed soiree to celebrate its first Houston location at the River Oaks Plaza. Close to 300 guests attended the evening, which was filled with glamour, style and, of course, lots of bare skin.

In addition to French daiquiris, Mumm Champagne and delicious French bites from Café Natalie, guests were treated to a swimwear fashion show featuring Zingara designs modeled by Brazilian models and a tour of the center's spa-like facilities.

Ten percent of the evening's sales and pre-paid services went to the Women's Fund, whose mission is to educate Houston area women and girls to be advocates for their health.

European Wax Center
1564 W. Gray
713-524-4949
waxcenter.com

FACE FORWARD

Because life is just too busy to be driving all over town for essential beauty treatments, Houston Skin Clinic recently opened a location inside TheOne Fitness, a high-end private gym at Voss and Woodway, near the Houston Country Club. Owner and aesthetician Susanna Schulz offers such services as photo facials, microdermabrasion and dermasound ultrasonic facials in a private and luxurious setting.

HOUSTON SKIN CLINIC
1305 S. VOSS
713-355-4300
HOUSTONSKINCLINIC.COM