



# The Beacon

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## Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

*“Guiding your way to better health management”*

### Do You Need A Flu Shot?

Despite all the publicity about how to prevent and treat the flu, it still hospitalizes 200,000 Americans every year, of whom 36,000 die. During the 2004 – 2005 season, flu vaccine was in short supply, but this year there will be 100 million doses – enough for everyone. You should be able to get yours beginning early this month (October). Remember, last year’s shot won’t protect you, because flu virus strains change.

This year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is advising a flu shot for all children aged 6 months to 5 years. It is also recommending one for the following:

- Individuals 50 years of age or older
- Women who are - or expect to be – pregnant
- Children and adults with chronic lung or heart problems (including asthma), diabetes, spinal cord disorders, HIV, Alzheimer’s disease and other cognitive disorders
- Residents of chronic-care facilities
- Medical personnel and anyone else providing treatment for the sick
- Children and adolescents aged 6 months to 18 years who are receiving long term aspirin therapy for any reason

Most doctors, however, advise all their patients to be vaccinated, except those who have a life threatening allergy to egg protein or chicken, or have had a strong reaction to a previous flu vaccine or suffer from Guillain-Barré syndrome, a paralytic illness.

The vaccine is not completely protective and it’s effectiveness decreases somewhat with age. If you do develop flu symptoms, you should seek treatment even if you were vaccinated: You may be one of the few for whom the shot does not work.

#### “Quotable Quote”

Cynics always say no. Saying yes leads to knowledge. So for as long as you have the strength, say yes.

Stephen Colbert

### OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast cancer affects more than 217,000 people a year in the United States alone. It is a serious disease that can be treated by a team of healthcare professionals with different specialities. Members of a healthcare team might include a surgeon, radiation oncologist, medical oncologist, radiologist, pathologist, oncology nurse and social worker, among others. Not everyone with breast cancer should receive the same treatment. Your particular medical situation will determine the type of treatment you receive.

### WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer is a malignant (cancerous) tumor that starts from cells of the breast. A woman’s breast is made up of glands that make breast milk (lobules), ducts (small tubes that connect lobules to the nipple), fatty and connective tissue, blood vessels, and lymph (pronounced limf) vessels. Most breast cancers begin in the ducts (ductal carcinoma), some begin in the lobules (lobular carcinoma), and the rest in other tissues. Lymph vessels are like veins, except that they carry lymph fluid instead of blood. Lymph is a clear fluid that contains immune system cells and waste products. Lymph vessels lead to small, bean shaped collections of tissue called lymph nodes. Most lymph vessels of the breast lead to lymph nodes under the arm. These are called axillary (AX-uh-lair-ee) nodes. If breast cancer cells reach the underarm lymph nodes and continue to grow, they cause the nodes to swell. Once cancer cells have reached these nodes they are more likely to spread to other organs of the body as well.

### MAIN TYPES OF BREAST CANCER

#### **Carcinoma in situ:**

This term is used for early stage cancer, when it is confined to the place where it started. In breast cancer, it means that the cancer is confined to the ducts or the lobules, depending on where it started. It has not gone into the fatty tissues in the

breast nor spread to other organs in the body.

**Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS):**

This is the most common type of noninvasive breast cancer. DCIS means that the cancer is confined to the ducts. It has not spread through the walls of the ducts into the fatty tissue of the breast. Nearly all women with cancer at this stage can be cured. The best way to find DCIS early is with a mammogram.

**Lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS):**

This condition begins in the milk making glands but does not go through the wall of the lobules. Although not a true cancer, having LCIS increases a woman's risk of getting cancer later. For this reason, it's important that women with LCIS follow the screening guidelines for breast cancer.

**Infiltrating (invasive) ductal carcinoma (IDC):**

This is the most common breast cancer. It starts in a milk passage or duct, breaks through the wall of the duct, and invades the fatty tissue of the breast. From there it can spread to other parts of the body. IDC is the most common type of breast cancer. It accounts for about 80% of invasive breast cancers.

**Infiltrating (invasive) lobular carcinoma (ILC):**

This cancer starts in the milk glands or lobules. It can spread to other parts of the body. About 10% of invasive breast cancers are of this type.

For additional information on risk factors, access the American Cancer Society Web site, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org), Breast Cancer Facts and Figures, 2006.

**To find a facility in your area, please call:**  
American Cancer Society (800) 227-2345  
National Cancer Institute (800) 4-CANCER

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**HOW TO GET THE NUTRIENTS YOU NEED**



Eating well shouldn't be a mystery. And yet, it can seem thoroughly confusing, trying to keep up with all the details and the conflicting research.

Still, it pays to understand the basics, so that you can make good choices for yourself and your family and be able to evaluate the latest nutrition news. [Here's what you need to know:](#)

- Nutrients keep us alive by helping our bodies to function properly.
- There are more than 50 different nutrients – “chemicals” such as vitamins, fatty acids, and amino acids. Our bodies need all of them all the time.
- We get all the nutrients in foods that we commonly eat. There's no need to seek out exotic, expensive, seasonal or other “special foods”.
- No single food other than breast milk supplies every nutrient. To get all the essential nutrients, you must eat a wide variety of relatively unprocessed foods, which come straight from the earth, trees or animals.

You are probably getting enough nutrients if you:

- Like fruits and vegetables
- Choose whole grains
- Eat small amounts of many different kinds of foods
- Don't follow food fads that restrict one or another food category
- Don't eat much junk food



**iPoditis**

**"Can you hear me now?" is taking on new meaning.**

If you've ever suspected that the popular earbud headphones -- which place the sound of music *in* the ears -- might have a deafening effect, you had it right. With the volume turned way up, even an hour

a day of direct-to-the-eardrums sound could lead to hearing loss.

Music addicts quickly discover that, unlike earmuff-style headphones, earbuds let them listen to tunes at a higher volume without anyone yelling, "Turn it down!" But whether the noise is hip-hop or Bach, overexposure can harm the ear's sensitive hearing mechanisms -- temporarily, if you're lucky, permanently, if not.

It's a good idea to limit both volume and the time spent wearing any headphones, but especially earbuds. Some experts suggest aiming for no more than a few hours a day of exposure to sounds higher than 90 decibels (about the sound of a vacuum cleaner or lawn mower). But to keep hearing sharp for years to come, noise researchers studying headsets recently recommended using them no more than an hour a day.

**Here's some good news:** You can download free software that locks in a volume limit on your iPod.

**Recipe Corner**



**Zesty Grilled Vegetables**

- 4 medium zucchini, cut diagonally into 1/2 inch thick slices
- 3 each red and yellow peppers, cut into 1/2 inch wide strips
- 1/4 cup Kraft Zesty Italian Dressing
- 1/4 cup Kraft 100% Grated Parmesan Cheese

Preheat Grill to medium heat. Grill vegetables 10 minutes, or until crisp-tender, turning occasionally. Place grilled vegetables in a large bowl. Add dressing; toss to coat. Sprinkle with cheese.

Cal. 80, Fat 3/5 g, Chol. <5mg, Sodium 220mg, Carb. 10g, Fiber 2g, Sugars 4g., Protein 4g.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition were Mayo Clinic Housecall and Brown University Health Education web sites.