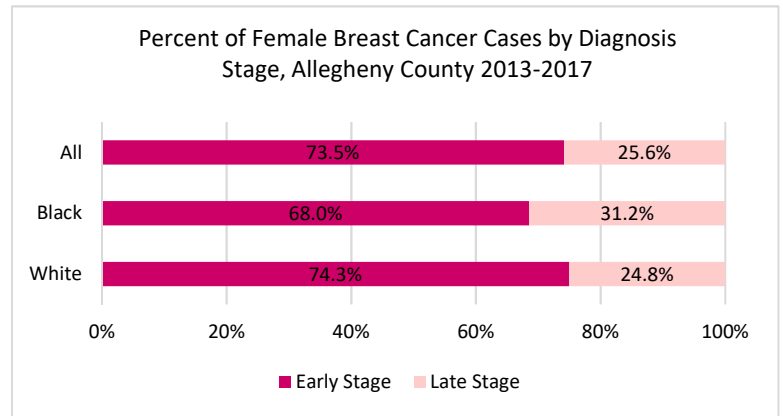




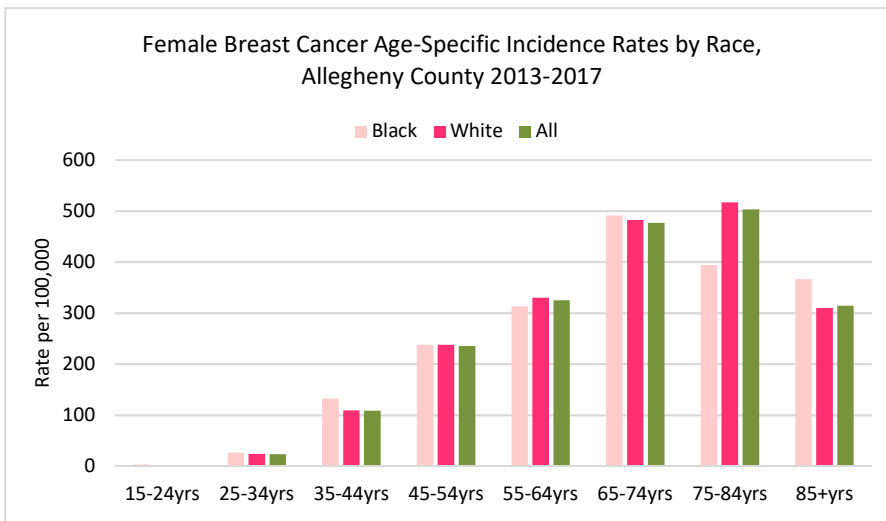
# Breast Cancer in Allegheny County

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in Allegheny County. From 2013-2017, there were 7,285 cases of breast cancer diagnosed (invasive and non-invasive). Of the cases, 73.5% were diagnosed at an early stage and 25.6% at a late stage. Black females were more likely to be diagnosed late stage than white females. In Allegheny County, the age-adjusted incidence rate of invasive breast cancer is 139.9 per 100,000 female residents (95%CI 136.3-143.0). The age at diagnosis ranged from 21 years to 104 years with a median age of 64.

Breast cancer occurs when the cells that make up the breast grow out of control and begin to invade normal healthy parts of the breast. These types of cells are considered invasive and can metastasize or spread by traveling through the blood stream or lymph system to other parts of the body. Signs and symptoms of breast cancer include pain, discharge from nipple, change in shape or size of breast, lump in the breast or underarm.



Many factors contribute to a person's risk of developing breast cancer. An individual's family history of breast cancer and genetics, like the BRCA genes, can increase risk. However, most women who develop breast cancer have no family history or genetic predisposition. Being female is the largest risk factor and the likelihood of developing breast cancer increases with age.



Yearly screening for breast cancer can help identify cancer early and improve long term outcomes. Mammograms, an x-ray of the breast tissue, as well as clinical exams and being self-aware of breast changes are all important screening tools. Mammography screenings are recommended to begin at age 40 for a woman of average risk and continue every other year until decided by the patient and provider. Mammography screenings prior to age 40 should be considered based on

personal risk and discussed with a physician. While most recommendations are targeted towards women, men also can develop breast cancer and should be aware of the signs and symptoms. In Allegheny County from 2013 to 2017, 58 males were diagnosed with breast cancer: 29 (50%) early stage, 28 (48%) late stage.

Always follow-up with your physician if you notice any changes in your breast tissue. Information on free screenings can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Health website [here](#). For information on screenings at UPMC facilities, call 412-647-1809, and at AHN facilities, call (412) 362-8677.

**Definitions and technical notes:**

**Invasive** – Invasive cancer indicates that there is abnormal cell growth occurring and these cells have continued to grow into new healthy regions of tissue.

**Non-invasive** – Non-invasive cancer or an ‘in situ’ tumor indicates that there has been abnormal cell growth, but it has not expanded beyond one region into other healthy tissues.

**Metastasized**- Metastasizing occurs when cancerous cells break from the tumor and are transported to other parts of the body where they continue to grow in the new region.

**Early Stage** – An early stage diagnosis indicates that cancer cells are localized in one area of the breast and have not yet traveled to other regions.

**Late Stage** – A late stage diagnosis indicates that cancer cells have spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body such as the bones and other organs.

\*Age-adjusted and age-specific rates are calculated using invasive cases. Stage-based statistics include invasive and non-invasive cases.

---

**Local Resources:**

[\*Allegheny Health Network: Pink Out\*](#)

Heritage Valley: <https://www.heritagevalley.org/pages/heritage-valley-breastcare>

St. Clair: <https://www.stclair.org/services/az-listing/medical-imaging/mammography/>

UPMC: <https://www.upmc.com/locations/hospitals/magee/campaigns/mammograms>

**National Resources:**

[\*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Breast Cancer\*](#)

[\*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Breast Cancer in Men\*](#)

[\*National Cancer Institute\*](#)

**References**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: What is Breast Cancer.

[https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic\\_info/what-is-breast-cancer.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/what-is-breast-cancer.htm)

BreastCancer.Org: Non-Invasive or Invasive Breast Cancer.

<https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/diagnosis/invasive>