



YOUR HEALTH

In Fighting Breast Cancer, Awareness Programs Making A Difference

(NAPSA)—You don't have to read medical journals to see progress against breast cancer. Just look around.

For starters, there are more survivors. The five-year relative survival rate for those with localized breast cancer has increased from 72 percent in the 1940s to 97 percent today, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS).

This good news is "most likely the result of both earlier detection and improved treatment," according to ACS—specifically, the regular use of mammography and improvements in cancer drugs.

Cosmetic company "pink ribbon" campaigns are credited with helping raise awareness—and hundreds of millions of dollars—to fight breast cancer. Awareness programs are often cited as a major factor in early detection and the increased survival rates seen in the last ten years.

To date, U.S. cosmetics companies have raised an estimated \$400 million since they kicked off pink ribbon efforts nearly 15 years ago. This money has gone to support a wide range of activities, including diagnosis, treatment, scientific research and awareness efforts.

"Unlike traditional fund-raising, where very little money has had very little impact, the hundreds of millions of dollars the beauty industry has raised have made a big difference in terms of spreading the word and finding a cure," says Diane Blum, executive director of Cancer Care, Inc., which provides free professional support for cancer patients.

Evelyn Lauder, the Senior Vice President of the Estée Lauder Companies, is credited with starting the pink ribbon as a worldwide symbol of breast health. The company offers special product sales every October to support the Lauder-founded Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF) in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. To date, BCRF has raised

over \$70 million for the cause.

Volunteers have been vital to pink ribbon campaigns. Whether it's the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer in one of six cities, the Revlon Run/Walk for Women in New York or Los Angeles or the more than 100 Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Races for the Cure, the makers of cosmetics and personal care products are out there with them.

Progress In The Fight Against Breast Cancer



- The five-year survival rate for localized breast cancer has increased from 72 percent in the 1940s to 97 percent today.
- More than 62 percent of American women now get mammograms regularly.
- Currently, two million women—at minimum—are living in the U.S. who have survived breast cancer.

How Can You Get Involved

Visit any of the Web sites below for information on how to participate in pink ribbon events:

www.komen.org, www.avonfoundation.org
or www.avonwalk.org, www.bcrfaware.org,
www.revlonrunwalk.org, www.mkacf.org 

"By participating in pink ribbon campaigns, participants know that they are helping save lives, fund the fight to find the cure, and provide access to care to someone who might otherwise not receive it," said Karen Montemaro, an Avon Leadership Representative who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. "This is very empowering and wearing an Avon pink ribbon pin gives off that pride. Pink Ribbon programs are important to keep hope alive for women and men who are affected or living with breast cancer—as I am."

Avon walks are a part of the larger Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Crusade, which began in 1992 and has expanded to 50 countries. The foundation has already

awarded over \$300 million to hundreds of breast cancer research and care organizations worldwide. Projects include clinical trials and other important studies into ways of diagnosing, treating and prevention of breast cancer.

The beauty industry's success in raising awareness has not only brought more women in for early detection, but it has also mobilized the clinical and medical field to push for more advancement in finding a cure. In 1998, the REVLON UCLA Women's Cancer Research Program successfully delivered the groundbreaking research that led to the development of Herceptin, the first non-toxic targeted therapy to fight against women's cancers. Herceptin is now available to women worldwide.

Honey Henricks, 56, knows the real impact of pink ribbon programs. "I truly believe that programs such as the REVLON Run/Walk are making a difference. As a two-time breast cancer survivor, I have always felt that these events give me a little bit more celebration of life," said Henricks. Henricks' team, the "CSD24 Cancerbusters" from Queens, raised \$58,000 in this year's Revlon New York walk.

Companies are also reaching out to members of Capitol Hill. Mary Kay, for example, has assisted the Komen Foundation pro bono in lobbying Congress to mandate that health insurers cover mammograms. To date, the Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation has provided nearly \$5 million in grants to U.S. accredited medical schools and schools of public health to support cancer research.

"We're thankful for the millions of women around the world who have participated in educational and fundraising pink ribbon programs," said Irene Malbin, Vice President of the Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association (CTFA). "We are hopeful that these efforts will lead us closer to a cure."

