



Just as the autumn leaf colors of orange, yellow ochre, and burnt sienna signal October's seasonal change, the color pink is synonymous with the National **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** observation in October. Each year, **1 in 8 women** are diagnosed with breast cancer in the U.S., with one-half of all breast cancers occurring between 55-74 years of age. An estimated 279,100 women across the country will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2020, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS).¹ This includes 8,340 Georgians and 4,970 South Carolinians. Although rare, men can get breast cancer.

This edition of **The C Word** features three leading types of breast cancer. The severity of the disease depends, in part, on the type of breast cancer, whether or not and how much the cancer has spread (invasive or non-invasive), and the person's overall health. Tumors are classified according to the cancer cells' features when viewed with a microscope, including how quickly or slowly they divide, and they are designated as low, intermediate or high grade. The more different the cancer cells appear from normal cells, the higher the grade classification. To help determine the breast cancer stage (Stages 0 to 4) and how the cancer should be treated, the tumor size, the number and location of lymph nodes affected, the amount of metastases or spread, tumor grade, estrogen receptor status, progesterone receptor status, and HER2 status are considered.² When detected at an early stage, breast cancers are highly treatable.

Invasive Ductal Carcinoma (IDC)³ As the most common type of breast cancer, IDC accounts for 8 in 10 breast cancers in women. It is also the most common type of breast cancer among men. As the name suggests, IDC begins in the milk ducts and has spread to other healthy breast tissues or to other parts of the body via the lymph or blood systems.

Ductal Carcinoma in Situ (DCIS) *In situ* is the Latin word for "in place." With Ductal Carcinoma in Situ, the abnormal cancer cells that line the milk duct have remained in the original place where they formed and have not spread into surrounding tissues. DCIS accounts for 1 in 5 new breast cancers.⁴

Invasive Lobular Carcinoma (ILC)³ This type of breast cancer begins in the milk-producing glands or lobules. ILC is the second most common invasive breast cancer and can spread to the lymph nodes or other parts of the body. It accounts for 1 in 10 invasive breast cancers. Usually ILC does not cause a firm or distinct lump in the breast. Instead, breast tissue affected by ILC may appear as a swelling or thickening that feels or looks different from the surrounding area, or the nipple may become inverted.

Augusta University Breast Health Center of Excellence

The AU Breast Health Center offers complete breast care by combining the latest technology with dedicated staff. The Breast Health Center performs digital 3D Mammography on all of their patients. Women ages 35-40 years can schedule their baseline (first) mammogram. Women over 40 years of age can schedule their annual screening mammogram without a doctor's order. The Center's hours are Monday through Thursday from 7:30am until 5:00pm. Call 706-721-9729 (721-XRAY) and select option 3 to schedule appointments through a dedicated Radiology Customer Care Center. For more information, visit the website www.augustahealth.org/imaging/mammography.

Sources

1. American Cancer Society Cancer Facts & Figures, 2020 cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/cancer-facts-figures-2020.html
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<https://ww5.komen.org/BreastCancer/StagingofBreastCancer.html#stages>
3. American Cancer Society cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/understanding-a-breast-cancer-diagnosis/types-of-breast-cancer/invasive-breast-cancer.html
4. American Cancer Society cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/understanding-a-breast-cancer-diagnosis/types-of-breast-cancer/dcis.html

"The C Word" is a news brief of the Georgia Cancer Center at Augusta University. For cancer information visit: augusta.edu/cancer/community. To request exhibits or speaking engagements, contact Christine O'Meara at comeara@augusta.edu or 706-721-8353.

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