



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Taking Strides in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

PATTY RITCHIE | October 2, 2014

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, HEALTH CARE**

Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

This month, our nation “goes pink” in honor of those who are fighting breast cancer and those who have lost their lives to the disease as well as to raise awareness among women about steps that can be taken to stay healthy.

Breast cancer is the second most common type of cancer affecting women and it's estimated that roughly one in eight women born today in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in their lives.

During National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I encourage all women to be proactive about their health by taking the following steps:

Get your mammogram regularly: If you're between the ages of 50 and 74, health experts recommend you have a screening mammogram every two years. If you're younger, sit down with your doctor to discuss when to start and how you should get screened.

Stay active and maintain a healthy weight: Being overweight can increase your risk of developing breast cancer. In addition, if you are diagnosed with breast cancer, being overweight can decrease your risk of surviving the disease. Maintain a healthy weight by exercising regularly—this will help to prevent disease by strengthening your immune system.

Limit alcohol consumption: To reduce your risk, it's a good idea to limit the amount of alcohol you drink. The CDC suggests no one more than one alcoholic beverage per-day.

Eat healthy: Some studies suggest eating a diet that is rich in fruit, vegetables, poultry, and low-fat dairy products can lower the risk of breast cancer.

Tap into resources: The Adelphi NY Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program is a fantastic resource where you can find answers to your questions about breast cancer and get support if you or a loved one is struggling with the disease. You can [visit their website](#) or call them toll-free at 1-800-877-8077.

During National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, our focus is heightened on what can be done to prevent and combat this deadly disease. However, it's important to be vigilant year round to protect ourselves and our loved ones. As we work to find a cure, I encourage you to be proactive year-round by talking with your doctor and taking the necessary steps to reduce your risk.