



K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

For immediate release:
October 9, 2007

Nicole Corcoran, Press Secretary
785.368.8500

The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:

October: Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Pink is not a traditional fall color, but pink ribbons are on full display this October in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

In Kansas, it's the second leading cause of cancer death among women. Annually 2,000 women in Kansas are diagnosed with breast cancer and 400 lose their battle.

My aunt died of breast cancer when she was 33, leaving five children behind. The good news is that medicine has advanced since then, and many more women are survivors today.

Early detection is key to treating the disease. If breast cancer is caught early, the five year survival rate is 97 percent. The American Cancer Society recommends women conduct self breast exams monthly, receive clinical breast exams annually, and that women over the age of 40 have a mammogram each year.

The State of Kansas provides mammograms free of charge to low income women between the age of 40 and 64 through the Early Detection Works Program at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. To date 20,000 Kansas women have received mammograms, 500 of which were diagnosed with breast cancer and were able to receive early treatment.

Women who are diagnosed with breast cancer deserve the highest quality medical treatment available. Here in Kansas we are fortunate that the breast cancer specialists at the University of Kansas Medical Center are leaders in diagnosing and treating breast cancer. The KU Breast Cancer Prevention Center saves lives through prevention, detection, and treatment, but extensive research is still needed to find the cause of and a cure for breast cancer.

In an effort to take cancer research to the next level, the KU Cancer Center is seeking a designation as a National Cancer Institute. Dr. Roy Jensen, a Kansas-born and nationally recognized breast cancer researcher, is leading the effort to make KU a nationally recognized comprehensive cancer research and treatment center.

For the one in eight women who will develop breast cancer in their lifetime it is of critical importance that we find a cure for breast cancer. I encourage Kansans to make a difference by supporting breast cancer research, education, screening and treatment not just during October and Breast Cancer Awareness Month but throughout the year.

For more information about free mammograms and the Early Detection Works Program, visit www.kdhe.ks.gov/edw.

###