

# Press Release Template

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## **ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IN BREAST CANCER STUDIED**

*Early Results Show Need for More Research, Says «Your Organization»*

(«CITY», «STATE» - «date of release») Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in American women, and approximately one out of every eight women will develop breast cancer during her lifetime. Accumulating evidence suggests that environmental factors – the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, and things we touch and put on our skin – may play a role in determining who develops breast cancer and who does not.

«Your organization» said today that early results from the Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Program (BCERP) indicate that parents and caregivers may be able to reduce the risk that young girls will develop breast cancer.

BCERP is a joint effort co-funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI). This multidisciplinary research program has been examining the effects of environmental exposures that may predispose a woman to breast cancer throughout her life. Studies have indicated that mothers may reduce their daughters' risk of breast cancer by limiting their own exposures to certain chemicals while pregnant or breastfeeding, and by limiting their daughters' exposure to those chemicals in childhood. Other studies suggest that girls may reduce their risk of breast cancer by maintaining a healthy lifestyle throughout life.

"It is too soon to tell for sure whether avoiding any particular chemical or food lowers the risk of breast cancer," commented «leader from your organization, title». "However, as this research continues, it may in time reveal environmental factors that affect risk of breast cancer, and confirm the actions that women can take to protect themselves and their daughters from this disease later in life."

Girls who enter puberty early are known to be at a greater risk of developing breast cancer later in life. BCERP studies are examining environmental factors that may be linked to early maturation, including higher body fat levels and exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals, such as phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA), which are known to interfere with the function of hormones in the body. Animal studies have shown that maternal exposure to BPA while breastfeeding can increase mammary cancer susceptibility of the female offspring. Other studies in laboratory animals suggest that high fat diets cause the animals to mature earlier than animals fed standard rodent chow, which are lower in fats. Scientists are quick to point out that animal studies play a vital role in advancing the understanding of how the mammary gland develops and the causes of cancer; however, research in humans will be needed to confirm a similar relationship exists between specific environmental factors and breast cancer risk in humans.

Parents and caregivers can learn more about steps that can be taken now that may reduce breast cancer risk later in life at [www.info.bcerp.org](http://www.info.bcerp.org).

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