

DOCUMENT TITLE: Breast Cancer Risk Factors

DOMAIN: Oncology - Breast Cancer

DOCUMENT TYPE: Risk Factors

LANGUAGE: English

LAST UPDATED: 2025

OVERVIEW OF BREAST CANCER RISK FACTORS

A risk factor is any factor that increases the likelihood of developing breast cancer.

Having one or more risk factors does not mean a person will develop breast cancer.

NON-MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS

- Female biological sex
- Increasing age
- Family history of breast cancer
- Inherited genetic mutations (BRCA1, BRCA2, PALB2, PTEN)
- Early menarche and late menopause
- Prior chest radiation before age 30

MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS

- Alcohol consumption
- Obesity, especially after menopause
- Physical inactivity
- Hormone replacement therapy
- Tobacco use

HIGH-RISK POPULATIONS

Certain factors confer a very high risk of breast cancer, including:

- Harmful genetic mutations
- Strong family history with multiple affected relatives
- Prior therapeutic chest radiation at young age