



# The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation



## THE MARKET

Every three minutes, a woman in the United States is diagnosed with breast cancer. The disease is prevalent and random, striking women and men of all ages and races. It is the leading cause of death among women ages 40–59, and is second only to lung cancer in all cancer deaths. This year alone, it is estimated that more than 41,000 women and men in the United States will die from the disease. The exact cause of the disease is unknown, and at this time, there is no cure.

But there is hope. Thanks to heightened awareness, earlier detection through screening, improved treatment methods, and increased access to breast health services, people have a greater chance of survival than ever before. Great strides have been made in the fight against breast cancer, and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation proudly serves as the leader in that fight, working tirelessly toward its mission of eradicating breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by funding research, education, screening, and treatment programs worldwide.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the past 25 years, the Komen Foundation has been instrumental in bringing breast cancer to the

forefront as a public health concern in the United States. It has changed the way people talk about and treat breast cancer. From the very beginning, the Foundation refuted the widely held belief that a breast cancer diagnosis was a death sentence to be served out in silence and isolation. Instead, the Foundation mobilized an unprecedented network of thousands of volunteers across the nation and beyond, who together ignited an international movement aimed at bringing the disease out into the open, and combating it head-on.



Today, the Komen Foundation is the nation's largest private funding source for breast cancer research and community outreach programs. Through the support of its more than 100 Affiliates, creative corporate partners, and generous donors, the Foundation has, since its inception, invested more than half a billion dollars in breast cancer research, education, screening, and treatment. As a result, there is hardly an advance in the fight against breast cancer that hasn't been touched in some way by a Komen Foundation grant.

## HISTORY

The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation was established in 1982 by Nancy Goodwin Brinker in memory of her beloved sister, Suzy,

who died of breast cancer at the age of 36. Suzy was diagnosed in 1978, a time when breast cancer was not openly discussed in public and little was known about the disease. As Suzy neared the end of her life, she asked her sister to promise to “do whatever she could to end the suffering caused by breast cancer.” Nancy created the Foundation as a way to honor that promise. Now, nearly 25 years later, millions of people around the world have taken Nancy’s promise and made it their own.

## THE PRODUCT

The Komen Foundation advances its mission through a comprehensive four-pronged approach that involves funding research, education, screening, and treatment. The Foundation runs one of the most innovative, responsive grant programs in breast cancer research today, with a focus on projects with potential for high impact that may not be considered by other agencies. Frequently, the Foundation is the only source of funding for cutting-edge breast cancer research, some of which has led to landmark discoveries in the quest to find the cure(s) for, and eventually prevent, breast cancer.

At the local level, the Foundation works through a grassroots network comprising more than 100 Affiliates working in more than 15,000 communities around the world. Affiliates are required to assess breast health education and breast cancer screening and treatment services in their communities to identify unmet needs. Based on these assessments, Affiliates fund a variety of

*Once a month, take your*  
**LIFE INTO YOUR HANDS.**

The sooner breast cancer is detected, the better the chance of treating it successfully. That's why screening is so important. Monthly breast self-exams, regular medical checkups and mammograms are all ways to improve your odds of finding breast cancer in its earliest stages.

Find out more about how you can take your life into your own hands by visiting [komen.org](http://komen.org) or calling 1.800 I'M AWARE®.

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community-based breast health education and breast cancer screening and treatment programs, with a special emphasis on filling existing service gaps and reaching the medically underserved.

Additionally, the Foundation operates a bilingual National Toll-Free Breast Care Helpline, 1.800 I'M AWARE®, that is committed to providing timely and accurate information to anyone with breast health and breast cancer concerns, including patients and their families and friends. The Foundation also hosts an award-winning Web site, [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org), that has extended the Foundation's reach into households across the United States and around the world. The Web site provides up-to-the-minute and consumer-friendly information about breast health, research advancements, local outreach programs, volunteer opportunities, events, and Komen Foundation programs and partners.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In addition to the \$45.1 million the Foundation invested in scientific research in 2005, it also committed funding totaling more than \$3 million toward five projects focusing on policy research and global breast cancer modeling systems research. The projects tackle issues related to breast cancer disparities among medically underserved population groups. Additionally, the Foundation designated up to \$2 million to support efforts to rebuild nonprofit institutions and providers of breast health and breast cancer care

in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, and to help organizations maintain the continuum of patient services in communities responding to the needs of displaced populations.

The Komen Foundation, the American Society of Clinical Oncologists (ASCO), the RAND Corporation, and Harvard University recently partnered to conduct a five-year study on the quality of cancer care and treatment that people in the United States receive. In addition to underscoring competencies and outstanding needs, the study served as the impetus for the Foundation and ASCO to collaborate on a widely available

brochure that helps breast cancer patients communicate more effectively with their physicians.

The success of its inaugural *On the Way to the Cure™* tour in 2004 prompted the Foundation to expand its interactive breast health education program for young women beyond college and university campuses to malls, athletic events, and festivals for a 13-week tour in 2005. The tour aims to engage all generations in the fight

against breast cancer. In 2005, the Foundation also launched its Komen Co-Survivor program to provide resources to the family, friends, and coworkers who support breast cancer patients through diagnosis, treatment, and beyond.

#### PROMOTION

The Foundation's primary education and fundraising event, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Race for the Cure®, started in 1983 with 800 participants and has since evolved into the largest series of 5K runs/fitness walks in the world. In 2005, more than 1 million people participated in more than 100 Races across the United States and internationally. In addition to raising vital funds and celebrating breast cancer survivors, the Komen Race for the Cure® also

helps raise awareness of the importance of a positive breast health program that includes annual mammography beginning at age 40, clinical breast exams at least every three years beginning at age 20 and annually at age 40, and monthly breast self-examinations for all women beginning by age 20.

In addition to the Komen Race for the Cure®, the Foundation also uses Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to educate the public and encourage people to join the fight against breast cancer. Each year, thanks to the generosity of numerous publications, the Foundation's PSAs reach millions across the country. These in-kind donations of space provide invaluable exposure for important breast health messages.

Cause-related marketing is another incredibly effective way the Foundation raises both funds and awareness. The Foundation works with a broad network of corporate partners to develop creative campaigns aimed at educating their associates, customers, and the general public, as well as funding the Foundation's mission activities. These programs, many of which are identified as "for the Cure" events, often enable individual donors to band together to make tremendous impact. From interactive learning programs to fund-raising events to pink ribbon product sales,

the Foundation and its partners offer multitudes of meaningful opportunities for people to become informed about breast cancer and become actively engaged in the fight against the disease where they live, work, and play.

#### BRAND VALUES

The Komen Foundation honors voluntarism and fosters the spirit to serve by the lives it touches. It nurtures an environment where people are valued and treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. The Foundation is committed to being a positive agent of change — demonstrating compassion and integrity in all its actions. It believes that distinguished financial performance is a must, not as an end in itself, but as a means to accomplish the Foundation's broader mission.



The Komen Foundation believes in the extreme value of one, and the dynamic force of many. What started as a sister's promise has grown into an international movement involving millions of people across the world. Together, the Foundation and its volunteers have changed the way people think about breast cancer. Together, they are finding out what causes the disease and how to prevent it. Together, they will fulfill the promise that started it all.

#### THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE KOMEN FOUNDATION

- The Foundation's founder, Nancy Brinker, is a breast cancer survivor. She was diagnosed in 1984, two years *after* establishing the Foundation.
- In addition to all the other audiences it serves, the Foundation depends on the input of four minority advisory councils to make sure that the programs it designs, the materials it distributes, the messages it sends, and the grants it funds keep the concerns of African Americans, Hispanics/Latino(a)s, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans at the forefront.
- The Foundation itself does not conduct breast cancer research. Through the Komen Race for the Cure® and other fund-raising activities, the Foundation and its Affiliates raise money to fund breast cancer research in leading institutions in the United States and abroad.

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