According to the Centers for Disease Control, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women and persons with breasts: one out of eight women in the United States will develop breast cancer. Although you cannot prevent it, being screened for breast cancer and following the ABCs of breast health can lower your risk.

The ABCs of Breast Cancer • Annual mammogram • Breast awareness • Clinical breast exam

The ABCs are important because you can find changes in your breasts early, find out quickly if the changes are benign or not, and increase your chances of a cure if you detect cancer.

Mammograms
Mammograms are quick, easy and safe x-rays. We sometimes can see things on a mammogram that we cannot feel, making it easier to find problems early. For those of average risk, the American Cancer Society suggests that women aged 40-44 get a mammogram only if your doctor suggests it. They recommend yearly mammograms for all women starting at age 45.

Breast Awareness
Learn how your breasts usually look and feel. Do breast self-exams and look for lumps, thickness and other changes. If you think something is not right, see your doctor. Most breast lumps are not cancer.

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The ABCs of Breast Health

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Clinical Breast Exam
A doctor, nurse or midwife does the clinical breast exam. Women over the age of 40 should have this manual exam every year. If you are in your 20s or 30s, have an exam every three years.

A good breast exam includes:
• A personal health history review
• A manual exam of the whole breast while you are standing or lying down
• A lesson about breast health and how to examine your own breasts

Developing breast cancer
• Age (the older you get, the greater the risk)
• Gender (women are more likely to get breast cancer, but men can get it, too)
• You or a close family member (mother or sister) had breast cancer

Preventing breast cancer
• Keeping a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly.
• Limiting alcohol and not smoking
• Breastfeeding your babies

Guidelines for a healthy diet: Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and lean proteins; avoid high fat foods; increase your fiber; limit processed foods; replace white flour, bread and pasta with whole grain

Call 866.442.CANCER (2262) for breast cancer screening locations in your area. Mammograms are provided in certified healthcare settings everywhere in New York State. Or visit Affinityplan.org.

Building a Healthy Relationship
A healthy relationship can do more than just make you happy. It can provide emotional support and a buffer against stress. For some people, a healthy relationship may even improve sleep patterns or blood pressure. In older people, social and romantic relationships have been shown to protect against physical decline and speed up recuperation time after hospitalization.

How do you know if you have a healthy relationship? And how do you build one? The signs of a healthy relationship include:
• Enjoying spending time together!
• Encouraging each other’s interests and goals.
• Having equal decision-making power in your relationship.

Good relationships take work from both partners. You can build a good relationship by:
• Building Trust – Listen to your partner.
• Be dependable – if you make plans, follow through on them.

Don’t assume what your partner is thinking or feeling. Ask.
• Having good fights. Couples disagree!

Keep making fun plans and going on dates, even if you’ve been married for years. Because of the social distancing rules we need to follow at the moment, you may need to be creative, but the effort will be worth it! You and your partner are sharing the story of your life together, a story that you are constantly rereading. You have some control over how enjoyable the memories and the story will be.

Resources for healthy relationships
Love Is Respect: loveisrespect.org, The Trevor Project: thetrevorproject.org, University of Wisconsin: https://parenting.extension.wisc.edu/healthy-relationships/additional-resources-healthy-relationships/
You Do Not Deserve to Be Abused

Domestic violence happens in all communities to people of every age, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation and income. Abusers are not easy to spot. They often only abuse behind closed doors. Here are some, but not all, of the ways abusers try to control their partners.

- Saying bad things about you much of the time
- Getting angry with you
- Not letting you see your family or friends
- Destroying your things
- Using your children against you
- Putting you down in front of others
- Making you have sex when you don’t want to
- Not letting you use the car, bank accounts, credit cards, and controlling all the money
- Not letting you go where you want, when you want
- Hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, shoving, or biting you
- Acting very jealous or overprotective

If you are in an abusive relationship, you are not alone. One in four women will be in an abusive relationship in their lifetime. It is not your fault. But leaving an abusive relationship can be complicated and may even be dangerous. Before leaving, think of:

- Four places you can go
- People who might help you
- Getting a cell phone in your name only
- Opening a bank account or charge card in your name only
- Excuses to leave the house or apartment, such as taking out the garbage or walking the dog
- How and when to take your children with you safely
- Packing a bag with things you use every day and hiding it where it is easy to get to. Items you might take with you include: Money (cash); keys to the car, house, work; extra clothes; medicine; important papers for you and your children such as passports or green cards, birth certificates, social security cards, school and medical records, credit cards and bankbooks, divorce and custody papers; pictures, jewelry, and other things that mean a lot to you; items for your children

Before leaving an abusive relationship, you and your family’s safety is most important. To ensure that safety:

- Have phone numbers for the police, hotlines, friends, or safe houses nearby.
- Tell friends or neighbors about the abuse. Ask them to call 911 if they hear angry or loud noises.
- Make up a code word and let friends and family know that when you use it you need help immediately.
- Choose safe places in your home where there are exits and no weapons.
- Think about ways to get any weapons there might be out of your house.

There are resources for domestic violence assistance in every county. New York’s 24-hour domestic violence hotline has multi-language accessibility. Call 800.942.6906.

SOURCE:
- [https://www.nyscadv.org/find-help/program-directory.html](https://www.nyscadv.org/find-help/program-directory.html)
Affinity Health Plan's Member Rewards Program encourages our members to visit their doctors for necessary screenings and services, and rewards them with gift cards when they do. These screenings can help find risk factors for diseases and keep our members healthy.

**BE Rewarded For Receiving The Care You Need!**

Visit us at [AffinityPlan.org/rewards](http://www.AffinityPlan.org/rewards) for the:
- Member Rewards Program guidelines
- Services covered under the program
- Eligibility guidelines
- Rewards Tracking Forms, which you and your doctor need to complete to receive your gift cards

For more information or questions, email us at rewards@affinityplan.org or call the Quality Management Department at 718.794.7764 (TTY 711).

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 866.247.5678, (TTY 711).

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