

October – Health Awareness 2020

Breast Cancer – Whether you or a loved one are worried about developing breast cancer, have just been diagnosed, are going through breast cancer treatment, or are trying to stay well after treatment, this detailed information can help you find the answers you need. The American Cancer Society even has information on breast cancer in men, see [Breast Cancer in Men](#). You can also help reduce your risk of cancer by making healthy choices like eating right, staying active and not smoking. It is also important to follow recommended screening guidelines, which can help detect certain cancers early. Please go to <https://www.cancer.org/cancer.html> for some great resources.



Rett Syndrome - Rett syndrome is a rare genetic neurological disorder that occurs almost exclusively in girls and leads to severe impairments, affecting nearly every aspect of the child’s life: their ability to speak, walk, eat, and even breathe easily. The hallmark of Rett syndrome is near constant repetitive hand movements. Rett syndrome is usually recognized in children between 6 to 18 months as they begin to miss developmental milestones or lose abilities they had gained. Rett syndrome is caused by mutations on the X chromosome on a gene called MECP2. There are more than 900 different mutations found on the MECP2 gene. Most of these mutations are

found in eight different “hot spots.” Rett syndrome is not a degenerative disorder with individuals living to middle age or beyond. Rett syndrome occurs worldwide in 1 of every 10,000 female births and is even rarer in boys. Rett syndrome can present with a wide range of disability ranging from mild to severe. The course and severity of Rett syndrome is determined by the location, type and severity of the mutation and X-inactivation. For more information please go to <https://www.rettsyndrome.org/>

Liver Cancer - The liver is one of the largest organs in the body. It filters harmful substances from the blood, produces bile that helps in the digestion of fats, and stores sugar that the body uses for energy. There are two types of primary [liver cancer](#) in adults – hepatocellular carcinoma and cholangiocarcinoma. Hepatocellular carcinoma is the most common type of adult primary liver cancer. It is relatively rare in the United States, although its incidence is rising, principally in relation to the spread of hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. For prevention, cancer screening resources go to <https://www.aacr.org/patients-caregivers/cancer/liver-cancer-adult/>



Spina Bifida - October is Spina Bifida Awareness Month—a time to celebrate the hundreds of thousands of people living with Spina Bifida. Spina Bifida is the most common permanently disabling birth defect that is associated with life. Approximately 166,000 individuals in the United States have Spina Bifida. It is a type of neural tube defect (NTD) that occurs when a baby’s neural tube fails to develop or close properly – the literal meaning for Spina Bifida is “split spine.” Typically occurring within the first 28 days of pregnancy while the neural tube is forming, Spina Bifida often occurs before a woman knows she is pregnant. Commonly referred to as the “snowflake condition” of birth defects because no two cases are the same, Spina Bifida can range from mild to

severe. The severity depends on everything from the size of the opening to the location on the spine. For more information please go to <https://www.spinabifidaassociation.org>