

Women's Health and Cancer in Unscripted TV

The Reality of Cancer Onscreen

Cancer can affect anyone and that can often include who we see on reality TV. If a female talent member of your unscripted TV show experiences a cancer-related scenario on screen, there is a responsibility to share their story with care and accuracy to help increase awareness and educate your viewers. A scenario might include going to the doctor, getting screened for cancer, discussing a concerning symptom, or receiving a diagnosis.

Authenticity and accuracy are critical when talking about women's health and cancer in entertainment because it provides an opportunity for your viewers to better understand their own risk, especially as rates of breast cancer and colorectal cancer are on the rise in younger adults. That is why our public health experts are available to consult with you by offering recommendations for storylines, reviewing show edits, providing public health information for end cards, websites, or social media, and more.

Experts are Here to Help

If a member of your cast or talent experiences any of the following scenarios, our experts are here to help you tell their story sensitively and accurately.

<i>If your talent experiences...</i>	<i>Our experts can help provide your viewers with life-saving public health information about the importance of...</i>	<i>This information is important for viewers to know because...</i>
A breast cancer diagnosis	<p>Young women learning their family history and risk factors and sharing what they learn with a healthcare provider.</p> <p>The importance of knowing the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.</p>	Time is of the essence for young women at risk for breast cancer. All young women need to know their family health history and understand their risk for breast cancer. If young women are found to have a risk of hereditary breast and ovarian cancer, there are steps they can take to lower their risk.
A positive testing for a genetic mutation that increases their risk for hereditary breast and ovarian cancer		Breast cancer in young women doesn't always present as a lump and can often be more aggressive and found at a later stage, when it is more difficult to treat.

Returning to the gynecologist after giving birth or reaching menopause	Routine gynecologic care, including continuing routine cervical cancer screenings, regardless of age.	Even if women have never visited a gynecologist or haven't been in a while, it's not too late to begin receiving care today.
A cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal, or vulvar cancer diagnosis		
A colonoscopy, perhaps for the first time	Screening for colorectal cancer, beginning at age 45.	Colorectal cancer doesn't always have symptoms, especially at first, which is why getting screened regularly is critical.
A colorectal cancer diagnosis		

This list is not exhaustive. If your talent or cast experience anything regarding the women's health and cancer related topics mentioned above, our experts are here to help.

Did You Know...

Breast cancer risk: About 10% of all new cases of breast cancer in the United States are found in women younger than 45 years of age. Breast cancer in young women is more likely to be hereditary than breast cancer in older women, more common among African American women, and more likely to be aggressive and found at a later stage when it is harder to treat.

Regular gynecologic care: There is no simple and reliable way to screen for any gynecologic cancers except cervical cancer. That is why it is especially important for women to receive regular gynecologic care, including continuing routine cervical cancer screenings, even after having babies or reaching menopause, and to learn their family history of cancer and share that information with their health care provider. It's also important for women to know that certain signs of gynecologic cancer – like abnormal vaginal bleeding, including any bleeding after menopause – should always be taken seriously and brought to your health care provider's attention. Even if they have never visited a gynecologist, it's not too late to begin receiving care today.

Colorectal cancer screening: Colorectal cancer affects both men and women and is a leading cancer killer in the United States, but it doesn't have to be. Screening for colorectal cancer, beginning at age 45, helps prevent colorectal cancer by finding precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) that can be removed before turning into cancer. It also helps find colorectal cancer early when treatment works best.