

Dear Friend,

*“If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.”*

When Harvard president Derek Bok first spoke these words, he probably wasn't thinking about breast cancer. But I was.

Thirty years ago, the chances of a woman developing breast cancer were one in twenty. Today, that figure is one in eight. This rate is slowly but steadily rising. Surely someone you know, if not you yourself, has been directly affected.

Breast cancer is more than a disease, it's an epidemic. One of the best ways to combat it is to educate women to take charge of their health. At the same time, we must increase public awareness, lobby decision-makers and fund cutting-edge research.

And that is why The Breast Cancer Fund exists. This is the only national organization devoted exclusively to ending breast cancer.

As a breast cancer survivor and as president of the Breast Cancer Fund, I am asking you to do two things:

1. **Take charge of your health.** No one has the power to manage your health and understand your body that you do. By performing breast self-exams, by educating yourself about breast cancer and by discussing your breast health with your doctor, you bring the balance of power in health care back to yourself.
2. **Give to The Breast Cancer Fund.** Our goal is to give women all they need to take charge of their health. The Breast Cancer Fund is a national non-profit organization that seeks to eliminate deaths from breast cancer in our lifetime, while supporting women living with the disease. Your support helps us create greater public awareness and new resources of funding for essential research and programs in prevention, detection and treatment.

Become as educated as you can. The Breast Cancer Fund is an excellent resource for you to help make informed decisions about your health. Some of the facts we have may surprise you.

- ◆ Do you think you're eating well? The “right” foods can be carcinogenic if they're tainted with artificial hormones and pesticides. Do you know how your foods are treated?
- ◆ Did you know that current mammography technology misses 20 percent of breast cancers in women over 50, and up to 40 percent for younger women?

- ◆ Did you know that there is the possibility of more reliable and earlier detection of breast cancer – without radiation? Right now, The Breast Cancer Fund is supporting cutting-edge research in Michigan into the role mammastatin, a protein found in healthy breast cells that is greatly reduced or absent in breast cancer cells. A blood test for this protein might detect cancer sooner, without the potentially harmful radiation of a mammogram.
- ◆ Even more exciting is the research that shows that injecting mammastatin into cancerous breast cells blocks cancer cell growth. So mammastatin may also offer a non-toxic, effective treatment.

At this very moment more than a million women in this country are suspected of having breast cancer – and they don't even know it. Add to that the nearly 1.8 million women who have been diagnosed and are living with breast cancer, plus the fact that this growing epidemic is killing one woman every 11 minutes, and hopefully you can see the urgent need for action.

Won't you join us? Thousands of women and men have, and with their support, The Breast Cancer Fund is making progress. The media is paying greater attention to this issue than ever before, reporting on new scientific studies and showing the human face of the epidemic. Legislation to improve access to detection and to treatment options continues to be introduced at the state and federal levels.

But the grim fact remains that this complicated and widespread disease continues to take the lives of hundreds of women a day, thousands of women a month. And breast cancer is reaching more women in their twenties and thirties than ever before.

We can't afford to wait any longer. Please let me count on you for your support. With the help of you and others who have demonstrated a commitment to the eradication of this devastating disease, we can help save lives.

Sincerely,

Andrea R. Martin  
Founder and Executive Director

P.S. Remember to practice good breast health, too. Give our office a call at (415) 346-8223 and we'll be happy to send you a breast self exam card for you to hang in your shower.