

OCTOBER:
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month?

National Cancer Industry Month

Cancer is big business.

The Cancer Industry consists of the polluting industries, public relations firms, and agencies that fail to protect our health and divert attention away from the need to prevent cancer by finding the causes. Not enough is being done to look into the environmental links to cancer. After all, what profit is there in preventing cancer?



Some who cause cancer also profit from it.

Du Pont produces various pesticides, some of which contain ingredients known to cause cancer. Du Pont also makes drugs to treat cancer. General Electric owns nuclear reactors and sells mammography equipment, both of which create ionizing radiation, a known carcinogen (cause of cancer).

NBCAM: A Public Relations Scam that Reaps Enormous Profits

AstraZeneca is the primary corporate sponsor of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM). They are the American subsidiary of UK-based AstraZeneca PLC, a \$15.8 billion international biosciences business including Salick Health Care, Inc., AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, and, until fall of 2000, Zeneca Ag Products.



AstraZeneca dropped its less profitable agricultural arm in 2000, but up until then, they had a complete profit circle:

- They made agrochemicals, including the carcinogenic herbicide acetochlor.
- They still own a string of cancer care centers, including doctors, pharmacies, and testing labs.
- They currently make the top selling breast cancer drug, tamoxifen, \$573 million/yr. worldwide.

AstraZeneca has final say about the content of official NBCAM materials. It should come as no surprise that there is no mention of carcinogens, or the need to find the causes and a true prevention for breast cancer. Instead, the focus is on “awareness” of breast cancer and the need for women to get their mammograms.

NBCAM = more awareness = more mammograms = more diagnoses = more tamoxifen sales = more \$\$\$

BREAST CANCER ACTION: WHY WE EXIST

BREAST CANCER MYTHS and FACTS

Mammograms do not prevent breast cancer- they detect it. While they are the best detection method currently available, they often miss breast cancers in women under 50. We need screening methods that are more accurate, less expensive, and risk free.

It is not a woman's fault if she has breast cancer. There is no known way to prevent it. There are methods that may reduce one's risk, but the truth is 70% of all breast cancer cases occur in women who have NONE of the known risk factors other than age.

Statistics and stories of women who have been "cured" of breast cancer use five-year survival as the definition of cure, despite the fact that breast cancer may recur at any time. Long term remission is NOT the same as being cured.

Every three minutes a woman will be diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States. And every hour five women will die from breast cancer, today, and every day. We can change these numbers. Let's find the causes. Breast Cancer Action is on the forefront of those demanding more research into the links between environmental factors and breast cancer.

CANCER and the ENVIRONMENT

Ionizing radiation is the only proven cause of breast cancer. Exposure to low levels of radiation can build up in the body and do harm. This does not mean you should never get another x-ray, but that you should be mindful of your exposure.

An estimated 75,000 chemicals are in commercial use today, two-thirds of which have never been tested for carcinogenicity. Meanwhile, production of these chemicals continues to rise at a rate of 3.3% per year.

Too often the lack of information about a chemical is paraphrased as "there is lack of evidence of harm," which in turn is translated into "the chemical is harmless." But chemicals should not be innocent until proven guilty.

The public should not bear the burden of proof that a chemical is doing harm. Those who produce these substances should instead prove their safety.

Approximately 11,000 different organochlorine compounds have thus far been released into our environment in the form of insecticides, solvents, plastics, dioxin, and other substances. Organochlorines have frequently been associated with cancer.

Organochlorines and other synthetic materials tend to linger in the environment and accumulate in our bodies. A lifelong exposure to small amounts of carcinogens adds up, and we're just now beginning to realize the toxic impact of these exposures.

Tips to "fight cancer" often list reducing fat intake as a crucial step, but don't mention that one reason this may reduce your risk is because high-fat, animal based foods are a main route of exposure to cancer-causing organochlorine pesticides and dioxin.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Get the word out! Start a campaign in your community to "Stop Cancer Where It Starts." Contact Breast Cancer Action (BCA) or the Toxic Links Coalition (510-302-0430 x305) for information on getting your city to commit to educating about and implementing less-toxic practices. Ask us about our resolution declaring October as "Stop Cancer Where It Starts Month."

Get Informed! Read *Living Downstream*, by Sandra Steingraber. Subscribe to Rachel's Environment & Health News (888-2RACHEL, www.rachel.org), and Mothers & Others for a Livable Planet's Green Guide (888-ECO-Info, www.mothers.org).

Get Active! **Join BCA.** We are a non-profit grassroots organization whose mission is to carry the voices of people affected by breast cancer to inspire and compel the changes necessary to end the epidemic. We publish a bimonthly newsletter, and have task forces you can join that monitor the media, write to legislators, protest polluters, and speak to the public.

BREAST CANCER ACTION

55 New Montgomery Street, Suite 323 - San Francisco, CA 94105
Toll Free: 1-877-2STOPBC (1-877-278-6722) - On the web: www.bcaction.org