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October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month . To find out more, including information on breast exams and scheduling a mammography, visit the website at www.nbcam.org.



NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Cheryl Brown's Experience Highlights Need for Self-Exams

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 20, 2004) It was a shock that April morning when Cheryl Brown's doctor said she had detected a couple of lumps in Cheryl's left breast during a routine physical examination.

"I had just received a mammogram eight months earlier and the results were fine," says Cheryl, an assistant transportation manager at Arthur Winston Division 5.

An ultrasound test confirmed the size and location of the lumps. After consultations with a radiologist and a cancer specialist, Cheryl decided to proceed with removal of the lumps.

If the lumps were cancerous, the doctor would remove some of the lymph nodes to see if the cancer had spread.

All the while, Cheryl fretted that she had not regularly checked manually for lumps. "We're advised to conduct self-examinations monthly," she says.

'Do I have cancer?'

Cheryl underwent the two-hour surgery. When she regained conscious, her first question was, "Do I have cancer?"

No, her doctor says, Cheryl was cancer-free. The lumps were benign.

"The lumps were fibroadenomas, common benign breast tumors that are too small to feel although sometimes they grow to several inches in diameter," Cheryl says.

According to the American Cancer Society, African-American women are affected with fibroadenomas more often than women of other racial or ethnic groups.

"I was humbled by the fact that God had granted me grace, and the prayers of family and friends made the difference," she says.

'Know thyself'

Cheryl advises women to "know thyself" - conduct self-examinations and



With a scary experience behind her, Cheryl Brown advises women to conduct regular breast self-examinations.

not rely just on annual mammograms.

On Friday, Nov. 5, Cheryl will help sponsor a fundraiser for a local organization, Women of Color Breast Cancer Survivor's Support Project.

"This group links African American survivors to one another and to resources and services," she says.

The function will be held at the FantaSea Yacht Club, 4215 Admiralty Way in Marina Del Rey. For more information call 310-780-8212.

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