



# Touch of Courage

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## Beyond Pink TEAM

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### Personal Care Products and Cancer Risk?

By Christine Carpenter

The Environmental Working Group's database, Skin Deep, pairs ingredients in more than 37,000 products against 50 definite toxicity and regulatory databases, making it the largest integrated data resource of its kind. Why did a small nonprofit take on such a big project? **Because the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) doesn't require companies to test their own products.**

An estimated 100,000 synthetic chemicals are currently registered for use in the U.S. Fewer than 10% of them were tested for their effects on human health. The use of chemicals in cosmetics and beauty products is NOT regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA has no authority to recall products with questionable ingredients. It does not require manufacturers to disclose them as ingredients or list product ingredients. Skin care companies do their own testing and no independent testing is required to insure safety before a product is brought to market.

"Natural" implies ingredients are extracted instead of being produced synthetically. A product with even one "natural" ingredient may use the word. A "Certified Organic" label must contain 95% organic ingredients – herbs or plants grown without conventional fertilizers and pesticides. The other 5% may include either synthetic or natural ingredients – but only if they are

not readily available in organic form.

Leading beauty care products frequently contain two classes of synthetic chemicals known as parabens and phthalates that can cause serious health problems. Parabens are used as preservatives to make products stay fresh longer, inhibit bacteria growth, yeast and molds and enhance skin absorption. It is found in underarm products. Phthalates are plasticizers and, in cosmetics, add texture and luster and disperse fragrance.

Parabens are shown to disrupt both male and female hormone functioning. Parabens also mimic estrogen which increases the risk of breast cancer. Other studies have found parabens in human breast tumors.

Phthalates were shown to cause cancer and birth defects in some animals, and sperm damage in adult men, childhood asthma, and allergies. There is evidence of phthalates' dangerous effects on male reproductive development during pregnancy and after birth.

The average American woman applies about nine to 12 products every day that together average between 126 to 168 ingredients. Combined with air and water toxins, the exposure adds up.

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, [www.safecosmetics.org](http://www.safecosmetics.org) lists

cosmetic companies that have pledged their products will meet the European union standards within three years and be free of chemicals known or strongly suspected of causing cancer mutation or birth defects.

Other ingredients that give cause for concern are talc (implicated in contributing to ovarian cancer) and BHA, a common preservative found in lipsticks, considered to be a likely carcinogen by the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer.

Placental extract (from human, equine or porcine sources) are used in cosmetics and hair products, particularly marketed to women of color. Research indicates use of these products in infants and children may be linked to precocious puberty or early sexual maturation which may increase breast cancer risk.

Find out what chemicals are lurking in your cosmetics and body care products by checking out the Environmental Working Group’s Skin Deep cosmetic database at [www.costmeticsdatabase.com](http://www.costmeticsdatabase.com).

The *Campaign for Safe Cosmetics* is a national coalition of nonprofit health, public health and environmental health organizations. It supports policy that would give the FDA Office of Cosmetics and Colors the authority and resources it needs to insure that cosmetics do not contain ingredients linked to adverse health effects. The organization is working with endorsing organizations, businesses and thousands of citizen activists to shift the cosmetic industry toward safer products and to advocate for smarter policies that protect our health.

### **Living Green** by Cindy Harris

How much are you recycling? Did you know that you might be able to get your trash down to just one or two small shopping sized bags a week?

When recycling, I use a tall trash can for plastics, a clothes basket each for cardboard and glass, a square basket for paper, a small bucket for tin and a plastic bag for returning plastic bags in. I also have a place outside for compost. To save space, flatten your cardboard and tin cans. Be sure containers fit in your car or truck. Take to the large recycling bins located nearest to you.

The one small shopping bag of trash I now have each week is a long way from the full-to-overflowing can that awaited the garbage truck each week. You will be amazed at the amount you can keep out of the landfill!

We can each make a difference and together we can make a bigger difference.

### **Living Beyond Breast Cancer** by Lisa Black

Did you know that Living Beyond Breast Cancer has a 24 hour toll –free helpline? Our trained volunteers are all breast cancer survivors who can provide peer support, information and hope in a confidential setting.

Our personalized matching service can even connect you with someone in similar circumstances. Whether you are newly diagnosed, have recently completed treatment

or are living with advance disease, our volunteers are here to help. If you have further questions about the LBBC Helpline, please contact [Lisa@lbbc.org](mailto:Lisa@lbbc.org).

### **Relay for Life** by Jill Roberts

Black Hawk County Relay for Life held in June at Hawkeye Community College was a great success! There were 93 teams total, with 28 new teams at the event. After a short rain that quickly cleared off, we had a beautiful night for walking to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The luminaries were lit and stayed burning throughout the night. In the early evening many families took part in the children's activities, or listening to the band. At the survivor’s reception there were 501 who attended with 171 survivors present. Out of these, 52 were new survivors.

The American Cancer Society saves lives by helping people stay well, by helping people get well, by finding cures and by fighting back. This event for Black Hawk County



raised \$ 184,866.10. What a great support for the American Cancer Society and its mission to find a cure!

## ***Beyond Pink Team Calls Upon All Women to Join the Love/Avon Army of Women***

Beyond Pink Team announces its support of a unique new program that offers women the opportunity to help unlock the key to *preventing* breast cancer: the ***Love/Avon Army of Women***. The *Love/Avon Army of Women* is seeking to recruit one million women nationwide to help researchers learn what causes breast cancer and move beyond a cure to prevention. Women in Iowa and across the U.S. are encouraged to be “one in a million” by learning more and signing up at [www.armyofwomen.org](http://www.armyofwomen.org).

The *Love/Avon Army of Women* is a partnership between the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation and the Avon Foundation and launched on October 1, 2008 to mark the start of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Women have taken personal action and raised millions of dollars that has advanced treatment and early detection, but researchers still do not know what causes the disease. The *Love/Avon Army of Women* empowers women with a new opportunity – a simple but revolutionary call for one million women of all ages and ethnicities to join the “Army” and consider serving as research volunteers to help scientists understand the causes of breast cancer – and how to end it once and for all.

“Beyond Pink Team’s chair, Dee Hughes states “We encourage women in the community to visit the new website [www.armyofwomen.org](http://www.armyofwomen.org) and be part of this important effort.”

All women not currently undergoing breast cancer treatment, including breast cancer survivors and those who never had the disease are eligible to register. Universities and research labs throughout the country may submit their studies for consideration to the *Army of Women*, and all research will undergo a thorough medical and ethical review. Some research may require women to complete a questionnaire, while others may require blood or saliva samples, or other simple steps (the research studies are not clinical trials and do not involve drugs or medical procedures). The *Army of Women* will serve as a virtual “matchmaker,” sending an email alert to women volunteers outlining the needs of each study, and women who meet the criteria have the option to take part.

“Women have repeatedly demonstrated through fundraising and advocacy their personal dedication to ending breast cancer,” says Dr. Susan Love, the visionary behind the *Army of Women* and a leader in the breast cancer movement for more than 30 years. “This new initiative gives women the opportunity to be part of the research itself and help shift the focus. The *Army of Women* will enable more scientists to move from studying cancer after it occurs, and testing new drugs and treatments, to seeking the cause and prevention. If we all join together, I know we *can* end breast cancer in our lifetime.” Dr. Love, a renowned breast cancer surgeon and respected expert in the field, is also the author of the best-selling *Dr. Susan Love’s Breast Book* and president of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation.

Why is the *Army of Women* important? “All too often, researchers cannot find the volunteers they need for their studies, or it takes up to 18 months to recruit enough,” explained Marc Hurlbert, Director of the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade. “The *Army of Women* will solve this problem and allow scientists to focus on their work, not recruitment, and provide timely access to healthy women volunteers, thereby moving the focus from the lab to real women, and accelerating research into breast cancer cause and prevention.”

Women nationwide are invited to be “one in a million” and help end breast cancer. Visit [www.armyofwomen.org](http://www.armyofwomen.org).

### **The Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation**

The mission of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation is to eradicate breast cancer and improve the quality of women’s health through innovative research, education and advocacy. For more information: [www.dsrlrf.org](http://www.dsrlrf.org).

### **The Avon Foundation**

The Avon Foundation, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 1955 to improve the lives of women and their families, and focuses on breast cancer and domestic violence. From 1992 through 2008, the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade has raised and awarded more than \$585 million. Funding supports five areas: awareness and education; screening and diagnosis; access to treatment; support services; and scientific research. Beneficiaries range from leading cancer centers to community-based non-profit breast health programs. For more information, visit [www.avonfoundation.org](http://www.avonfoundation.org)

## The New Color of October

By Barbara Grassley

In Iowa, October brings a chill to the air as well as the brilliant hues of orange, gold, brown and red. Now-a-days we're adding another beautiful color to the October color scheme—pink! October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month designated to remind us to take charge of our breast health to help prevent this horrible disease.

I know first-hand the need to continue to raise awareness about breast cancer. I'm a survivor. I can see the significant progress that has been made since the October awareness campaign was first launched more than 20 years ago, about the time I was diagnosed with the disease. Millions of dollars have been raised for breast cancer research, and the rate of women dying from this disease has been dropping. Today, there are more than 2 million women living in the United States who have been treated for this disease and when breast cancer is detected early, the five year survival rate is 98 percent.

Despite the good news, [breast cancer remains the second leading cause of death from cancer in American women](#). According to the American Cancer Society, in Iowa alone there will be 1900 new cases diagnosed in 2008 and nearly 400 women will die from the disease. However, I am a firm believer that survival rates can be increased through the use of effective screening tools. The combination of monthly breast self-exams, yearly clinical breast exams, and regular mammograms beginning at age 40 is the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest and most treatable stages. Here are specific steps you should take:

**Breast Self-Exam (BSE):** Every woman should examine her breasts once a month to check for physical changes. If you are unsure of how to perform a breast self-exam, ask your health care provider to demonstrate and explain the ideal time to conduct one. It is very important for women to become familiar with their breasts and understand what feels normal. Start early, beginning at age 20.

**Clinical Breast Exam (CBE):** Be sure to ask your health care provider to give you a clinical breast exam each year. The exam consists of checking the breasts for any changes, lumps, or other possible warning signs of breast cancer through physical touch and

appearance. You should begin having clinical breast exams in your 20s and 30s.

**Mammography:** Beginning at age 40, all women should have an annual mammogram. It is a good idea to have a baseline mammogram at age 35. The mammogram is an "x-ray" of the breast and is the most effective method of detecting breast changes that may be cancer, long before physical symptoms can be seen or felt. Booking the appointment each year around your birthday is a good way to remember a mammogram every year.

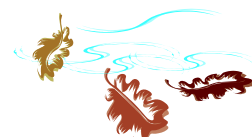
It is also important to know that while all women (and yes, men, too) are at risk, some women are at a higher risk. Age itself is a risk factor for breast cancer; about 77 percent of the women diagnosed are over the age of 50. Also at higher risk are women with a family history of breast cancer, women with inherited abnormal genes, women who have previously had cancer in one breast, and obese women with sedentary lifestyles.

Breast cancer is often detected in its earliest stage as an abnormality on a mammogram before it can be felt by a woman or by her health care provider. This makes it all the more important to get that mammogram. The first one is always the hardest, but it may just save your life. Some other common sense prevention tips that will also keep you healthy are to eat a low fat diet, exercise regularly, and not smoke.

I hope you will take these tips and talk to your health care provider, especially if you suspect you are at high risk. With the strides being made in prevention, there are lots of ways to help prevent breast cancer whether you are high risk or not.

So when you see pink among the beautiful fall colors in Iowa, let it serve as a reminder to get screened and also to be vigilant about prevention all year round.

*Barbara Grassley is an executive board member of the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program of the Prevent Cancer Foundation. She and her husband, U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley, are active promoters of cancer awareness and prevention. If you would like additional information on cancer prevention, please visit [www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org)*





## A Survivor's Story by Kitty Ott

It wasn't going to happen. I had participated in a five year study of Tamoxifen. That would take care of breast cancer for me! I should have known better.

I have four older sisters, three of whom had breast cancer. My fourth sister suffered cancer of the mouth and then a second bout with brain cancer. My youngest sister died too young, at age 49, from breast cancer. My older sister had a double mastectomy. She is now an active 91-year-old volunteering at her local Georgia nursing home, thinking up fun and games for the "old folks".

I was surprised when my annual mammogram showed breast cancer - ductal carcinoma in situ. I felt nothing on my monthly self breast exam just a week before. I was told by Dr. Duven the lumps were too small to feel. Shows the importance of a mammogram! I've now had two surgeries and just completed 33 radiation treatments. Thank God for no chemotherapy.

My experience at the cancer center was a most happy one. The gals in radiation were my "clinic angels". Getting to meet them was an added bonus. They are a pretty lot - always upbeat, pleasant and a joy to be around. I thank them and the doctors for making me feel important and making my visit to the cancer center pleasant. I'd love seeing them again, just not under the same circumstances!

The word "cancer" scares us all. Taking radiation treatments had me feeling a bit apprehensive but

it wasn't as bad as I thought. It took longer to take off my blouse and put on a robe than it did to have the treatment. I love to tell that on my first visit I got "marked" to show the area on my breast for radiation. I told the girls that if I can't have a butterfly marking I don't want any markings at all. Would you believe the next day I received faux tattoos of butterflies? Pretty neat, huh?

I don't consider myself a victim of cancer and my experience hasn't been unpleasant. A quiet, early spring morning drive to the clinic looking at the flowering trees, and then later, the blooming flowers, was magnificent. I loved checking on the mallard drake roaming the yard backing onto Ridgeway Avenue. You may think I'm a bit daft to find pleasure in these things at this time!

It's nice to have the treatments behind me. And I hope I have the cancer behind me too. I thank God I've gotten past this chapter in my life. I also thank God that he gave me cancer in the spring instead of the nasty, dark winter. There is some good in all things and I've been very blessed.

### Tulip Bulb Pick-Up

If you ordered pink tulip bulbs from the Beyond Pink TEAM, remember to stop by the Covenant Cancer Treatment Center, 200 E. Ridgeway Avenue from 9:00-11:00 am on Saturday, October 17, 2009. The CTC is located next door to Jim Lind BP gas station, across the street from West High. Pull up to the main patient entrance, and one of the Beyond Pink TEAM members will be there to hand your order to

you. You do not need to park and get out of your car.

The Plant it Pink: Hope Blooms for Breast Cancer campaign has had another successful year. We began the program two years ago, and have sold over 15, 000 pink tulip bulbs. Thank you for your orders. We can't wait to see the Cedar Valley blooming pink again next spring!

### Save the Date!

**Oct. 3 8:00 a.m.**  
***Pink Ribbon Run***  
Starts at 6<sup>th</sup> and Main  
Downtown Cedar Falls

**Oct. 5 1:30 p.m.**  
***Touch of Courage***  
Breast Cancer Support Group  
2101 Kimball Ave., Waterloo  
Dawn Colbert 415-6430

**Oct. 6 1:30 p.m.**  
***Care and Share Support Group***  
for anyone with cancer  
Covenant Cancer Treatment Ctr.  
Jeanne Mullen 272-2816

**Oct. 17 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.**  
***Tulip bulb pick up***  
Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
200 E. Ridgeway Ave., Waterloo

**Oct. 22 6:30 p.m.**  
***Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action***  
UNI Ctr. for Energy & Environ. Ed.  
Corner-Campus St & Jennings Dr.  
Christine Carpenter 266-0194

**Oct. 22 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.**  
***Environmental Hlth Wking Group***  
UNI Ctr. for Energy & Environ. Ed.  
Corner-Campus St & Jennings Dr.  
Christine Carpenter 266-0194

**Nov. 2 1:30 p.m.**  
***Touch of Courage***

**Nov. 3 1:30 p.m.**  
*Care and Share Support Group*

**Nov. 19 6:30 p.m.**  
*Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action*

**Nov. 19 6:30 p.m.**  
*Environmental Hlth Wking Group*

**Dec. 1 1:30**  
*Care and Share Support Group*

**Dec. 7 1:30 p.m.**  
*Touch of Courage*

**2010**

**Jan. 4 1:30 p.m.**  
*Touch of Courage*

**Jan. 5 1:30 p.m.**  
*Care and Share Support Group*

**Jan. 19 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.**  
*Young Cancer Survivors Event*  
3712 Cedar Hts. Dr, Cedar Falls

**Jan. 28 6:30 p.m.**  
*Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action*

**Jan. 28 7:00 p.m.**  
*Environmental Hlth Wking Group*

**Look Good...Feel Better  
Hair-Make-up-Nails-Skin Care**

Every other month the American Cancer Society sponsors Look Good...Feel Better events held at the Covenant Cancer Treatment Center. A volunteer stylist will assist those in cancer treatment with a complimentary makeover and skin care session.

To reserve your spot and free products, contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345. It's like a make-over for the spirit!

**Resources**

Information, support, counseling, and educational materials are available from the following:

**Beyond Pink TEAM** is a local breast cancer organization providing a variety of services. Our website lists services we provide as well as other services available in the Cedar Valley. [www.cedarvalleybreastcancer.org](http://www.cedarvalleybreastcancer.org)

**Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action** is a local advocacy group taking action against breast cancer. [www.iowabreastcancer.org](http://www.iowabreastcancer.org)

**Living Beyond Breast Cancer** includes a helpline, newsletter and information. Survivors Helpline: 888-753-5222 [www.LBBC.org](http://www.LBBC.org)

**Young Survival Coalition** connects with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer. [www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

**Cancer Care** is a national nonprofit organization offering counseling, support, financial assistance and education to individuals with cancer and their families. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**Iowa Cancer Consortium** offers cancer information and links to resources in Iowa. [www.canceriowa.org](http://www.canceriowa.org)

**American Cancer Society** offers cancer information and services. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

**National Breast Cancer Coalition** The NBCC's mission is to eradicate breast cancer by focusing the government, research institutions and consumer advocates on breast cancer. It encourages advocacy for action and change. [www.stopbreastcancer.org](http://www.stopbreastcancer.org)

**M.D. Anderson Cancer Center**, University of Texas offers patient and cancer information. [www.mdanderson.org](http://www.mdanderson.org)

**Susan G. Komen for the Cure** website offers cancer and social networking information and a newsletter on their website. [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

**Iowa Breast Resource Guide** is available on the Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-action website. [www.iowabreastcancer.org](http://www.iowabreastcancer.org)

Connect with us...

A donation for Touch of Courage is both needed and appreciated. All donations go to support the services of the Cedar Valley Cancer Committee and are tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ amount of donation

General Donation  Newsletter Donation  NBCC Scholarship Fund

Make checks payable to the Cedar Valley Cancer Committee and send to 1607 Heath Street, Waterloo, IA 50703