Tina Knowles Learned She Had Breast Cancer After Missing a Routine Mammogram

“You must go get your test,” urges Knowles, mom to Beyoncé and Solange. Docs could have found her cancer earlier, she says in her new memoir, “Matriarch.”

April 30, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

In her memoir, Matriarch, Tina Knowles reveals that she was diagnosed with breast cancer last July after missing a scheduled mammogram. Now, the mom to Beyoncé and Solange is encouraging folks to prioritize routine cancer screenings.

Knowles, 71, told People that she felt blindsided last summer when doctors discovered Stage I breast cancer in her left breast. She also revealed that she had missed a scheduled mammogram during the COVID-19 pandemic that could have detected her cancer at Stage 0.

“I forgot that I didn’t go to get my test two years before I thought I had because COVID came,” she told People. “And they called me and canceled me, and they said, ‘We’ll call you when we start testing again,’” she said. “And I just thought I had done it. So you cannot play around with that.”

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by People Magazine (@people)

Nearly 317,000 women are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer annually, according to the American Cancer Society. Regular screening for breast cancer can detect the disease early, when it is easier to treat.

“It’s important not to slack on your mammograms,” she said.

Late last year, Knowles underwent a successful surgery to remove the breast cancer.

“I’m doing great,” she said. “Cancer-free and incredibly blessed that God allowed me to find it early."



View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Tina Knowles (@mstinaknowles)

In Matriarch, Knowles shares that her daughters took the news of her diagnosis well and remained positive throughout her journey. Destiny's Child member Kelly Rowland also offered unwavering support.

"My girls became my team," she writes in her book.

The grandmother of four added that she's now eating healthier and has lost weight.

"I think as women, sometimes we get so busy, and we get so wrapped up and running around, but you must go get your test," she told People. "Because if I had not gotten my test early, I mean, I shudder to think what could have happened to me."

Mammograms are the primary method of breast cancer screening; however, experts don't agree about how early or how often mammograms should be done.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends women ages 40 to 74 get mammograms every two years, adding that evidence is insufficient for those 75 and older. The American Cancer Society recommends annual screening for women ages 45 to 54; those 40 to 44 also have the option. Those 55 and older can opt for either annual or biannual screening.

To learn more, click #Mammograms or read Cancer Health's Basics on Breast cancer. It reads in part:

What is breast cancer?

Cancer develops in breast tissue when cells grow out of control. Malignant cells can form a tumor that may be visible on mammograms or felt as a lump.

Breast cancer is easier to treat than many other cancers, and early detection and treatment improves outcomes. But if cancer is diagnosed after it has spread elsewhere is the body, it is harder to treat and the likelihood of survival is lower.

What are the risk factors for breast cancer?

According to the CDC, besides being a woman and getting older, other factors that influence the risk of developing breast cancer include:

- Genetic mutations (including BRCA1 and BRCA2);
- Family history of breast cancer;
- Early onset of menstruation or early menopause;
- No full-term pregnancies or first pregnancy at an older age;
- Not being physically active;
- Overweight or obesity, especially after menopause;
- Use of oral contraceptives or hormone replacement therapy;
- Previous radiation therapy;
- Drinking alcohol.

What are the symptoms of breast cancer?

The most common sign of breast cancer is a lump or mass. A hard and painless mass is most likely to be malignant, but cancerous tumors can sometimes be tender, soft or painful. Other symptoms may include breast swelling, skin irritation or dimpling, breast or nipple pain, nipple retraction (turning inward), redness, scaliness or thickening of the nipples or skin of the breast and discharge from the nipple.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/tina-knowles-learned-breast-cancer-missing-routine-mammogram