

# Cancer, heart disease top killers of women

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WHILE the world celebrates the accomplishments of women this month, the observance of the International Women's Month also serves as the perfect time to remind women of the health issues that haunt them.

Recent data from the Department of Health remain the top cause of death among women in the Philippines. Heart disease came second, followed by pneumonia.

about 30 percent of all cancer diagnosis, and about 30 percent of cancer cases among women. Doctors estimate that three out of 100 Filipino women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.

In February 2017, the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society released data showing that the Philippines had the highest prevalence of breast cancer among 197 countries.

There is no known cause of breast cancer. Doctors seldom know why a woman develops breast cancer and another doesn't, and most women who have breast cancer will never be able to pinpoint an exact cause. What is known so far is that breast cancer is always caused by damage to a cell's DNA.

To reduce the risk of breast cancer, doctors advise women to lessen alcohol intake, avoid smoking, maintain a physical lifestyle, breastfeed their children, reduce hormone therapy, and avoid exposure to radiation and pollution.

Early detection is key to keeping women alive and healthy.

Regular examination of the breast, detects breast tumors long before Experts advise that women take a screen test to verify risk at an early stage, especially for those women 40 years-old and above.

## Ischemic heart diseases

Also known as coronary heart failure, this silent disease occurs in persons who have a strong build-up of plaque in their coronary arteries, preventing blood from reaching the coronary arteries. It gets worse over time and can cause angina, heart attacks, heart failure, and arrhythmias.

The best way to prevent this disease is to live a healthy lifestyle — working out, eating a balanced meal, avoiding cigarette smoke, and maintaining one's appropriate weight.

In addition, one should manage other health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.  
to the development of the disease.

### Pneumonia

An infection that causes the lungs to fill up with fluid and pus, pneumonia is highly contagious. One can be affected, especially those with a weak immune system, through contact or droplets.

Washing hands and covering one's mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing can help curb the spread of the disease.

Getting pneumonia vaccination every five years is highly advised as well.