



# Breast Cancer

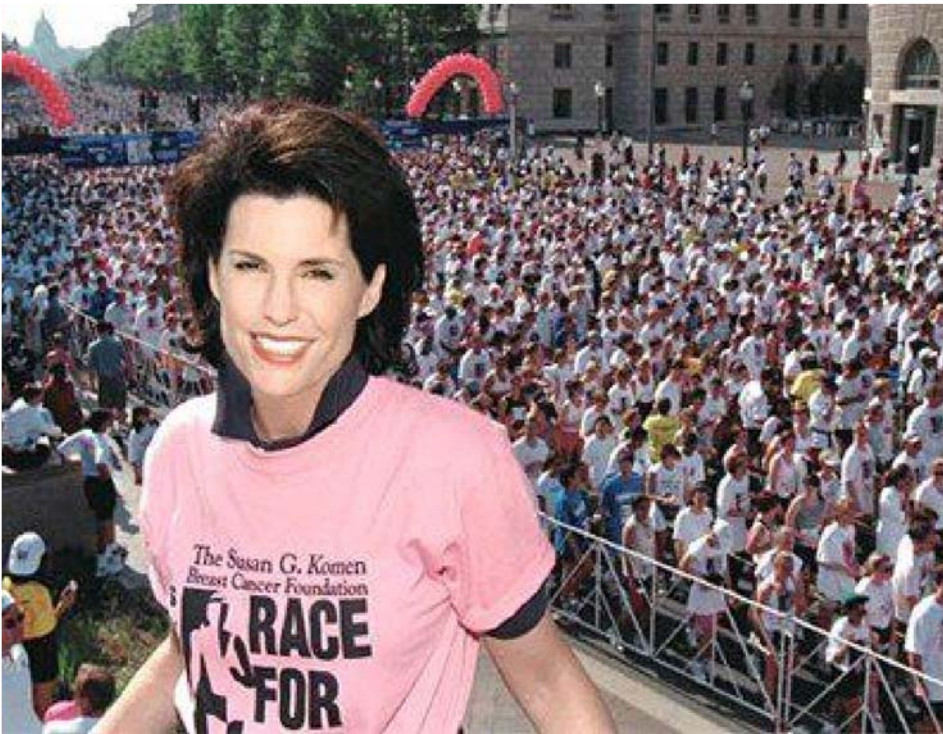
**A woman is diagnosed with breast cancer every three minutes** in the United States. Breast cancer strikes one in eight women. The statistics are staggering; they are even more powerful when the stat becomes humanized because you KNOW one of these women. Co-author Charlotte is one of those women. We both know many additional women who are survivors and a few who have succumbed to this disease. Many women and organizations have worked and are working to both prevent and cure breast cancer.



As we have been writing these columns for the Kalon Magazine over this past year, we have been continually reminded that our book chronicles women in every category. Yes, there are dancers, poets and scientists. Yes, there are writers, astronauts and politicians. There are also women who have survived and women who have died from breast cancer.

In 1974, when First Lady **Betty Ford** had a mastectomy,

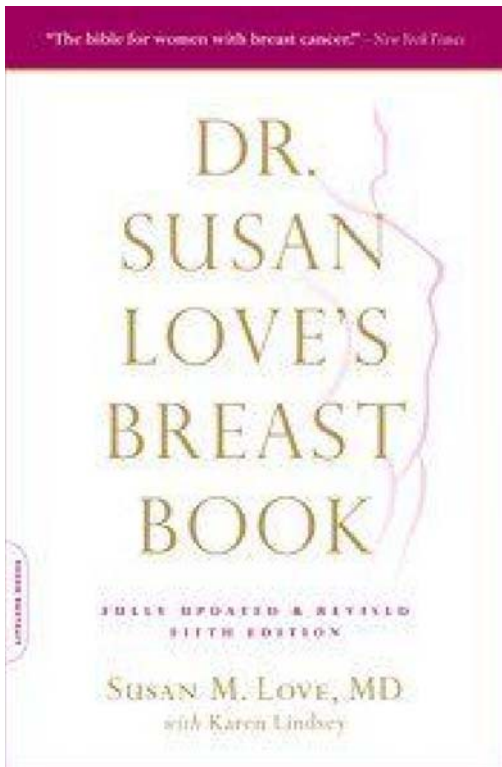
“breast cancer” was something people never openly discussed. Her frankness about her illness raised the visibility of this disease. Some people believe that Ford’s openness was actually a key moment in breast cancer history—for the publicity surrounding her radical mastectomy helped many women to go for mammograms, physician check-ups and self-checks. Ford’s mastectomy offers an identity, or subject; it made a statistic “real.” “When other women have this same operation, it doesn’t make any headlines,” she told *Time* magazine. “But the fact that I was the wife of the President put it in headlines and brought before the public this particular experience I was going through. It made a lot of women realize that it could happen to them. I’m sure I’ve saved at least one person—maybe more.” Further amplifying the public awareness of breast cancer were reports that several weeks after Ford’s cancer surgery, Happy Rockefeller, the wife of the then vice president, also underwent a mastectomy.



One of the earliest and most influential organizations to lead the public fight against breast cancer was founded over twenty-five years ago. In 1982, **Nancy Brinker** founded the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in memory of her sister who died of the disease. Susan’s concern, even as she was losing her battle, was to make treatment better for other women fighting breast cancer. Nancy promised her sister that she would

do everything she could to end breast cancer forever. Imagine life without breast cancer—where your mother, daughter, sister or friend doesn’t have to worry if she will be the one-in-eight women diagnosed with the disease.

While we have made tremendous progress in the fight, people are still dying from breast cancer—and that’s unacceptable. One of Brinker’s early funding strategies was the “Race for the Cure”, at that time, a unique way to raise money for charity. Since its inception, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, the largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists, has raised more than \$1.5 billion for research and treatment; it is the largest source of non-profit funds dedicated to



fighting breast cancer. In 2009, Nancy Brinker was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama. This award is our nation's highest civilian honor.

Breast cancer surgeon, **Dr. Susan Love** wrote *Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book*, which is both highly respected and now the standard text reference in the field. The fifth edition will be out in October 2010. This authoritative guide explains the latest breast cancer science and provides essential information women need to make decisions about breast cancer treatment and prevention. The book provides needed information in ways that a woman who has questions can easily access.

Love also established the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation, whose mission is to eradicate breast cancer and improve the quality of women's health through innovative research, education, and advocacy. Since 2005, the Foundation has received more than four million dollars to pursue its own prevention research; since 1998, the Foundation has awarded pilot grants totaling more than \$900,000. While advances have been made in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, we still don't understand what causes breast cancer or how to prevent it. The Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation is dedicated to getting to where breast cancer begins—in the breast ducts—and its research is focused on the anatomy of the breast and breast cancer prevention. You can get involved in research through the Foundation. For example, they are currently looking for 20 Los Angeles-area women who are between 35 and 55 years of age to take part in a study testing a new nipple fluid patch. They need female subjects who are women who are high-risk, women with breast cancer, and women who have never had the disease.

The Avon cosmetics company also takes an active role in alerting women to many of the issues surrounding the prevention and cure of breast cancer. The Avon Foundation was founded in 1955 with the goal of improving women's lives, and today is the largest corporate philanthropy dedicated to women's causes globally. One of the two focuses of the Foundation is to support breast cancer research and access to care. The CEO of Avon, also described as "The Company for Women," is **Andrea Jung**.





Breast cancer remains the single most commonly diagnosed form of cancer worldwide. We also know that a small number of men are victims. We salute the many people and organizations who are working to treat cancer and prevent it. We sincerely ask you to make sure that you and everyone you know go in for regular mammograms. Early detection appears to be the most common way we are winning this fight; but even that is too late!

Support one another; remind everyone you know to do self examinations. Give money, run, or walk for the cure! Work to sustain efforts to eradicate breast cancer in any way that you can.

### Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

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