

**Cancer is a global problem,
but it affects the world locally...**

One Person at a Time



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For Immediate Release

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SONOMA COUNTY CANCER RISK ASSESSMENT PROJECT PHASE ONE – A SUCCESS

North Bay Cancer Alliance announces successful
launch of breast and ovarian cancer identification and awareness project

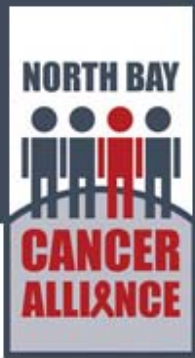
Santa Rosa, CA (September 7, 2009) North Bay Cancer Alliance (NBCA) is pleased to announce a successful launch of a women's breast and ovarian cancer identification and awareness project it funded with a grant of \$160,000 in July 2008. The Sonoma County Cancer Risk Assessment Project, known as SCRAPPI, is being conducted at Redwood Regional Medical Center and so far, more than 260 women have completed the SCRAPPI assessment questionnaire and eight were discovered to be at high risk.

"SCRAPPI is the first coordinated regional effort anywhere in the world to find women who are at increased risk for developing breast and ovarian cancer because of their genetic inheritance or personal history –and it's FREE," states Dr. Charles Elboim, Sonoma County breast surgeon and project co-developer. "SCRAPPI's aim is to find these women before they develop their cancers and offer them personalized counseling about their options. We hope to expand the program to all of Sonoma County and in the future, to make it the springboard for finding mutation carriers at risk of other diseases such as colon cancer."

This year, 370 women in Sonoma County are expected to learn they have breast cancer. It is not hard to understand why women often describe this all too common disease as their greatest health fear. Although all women are at risk, women with BRCA gene mutations, women with strong family histories of breast or ovarian cancer and women with certain personal risk factors have a much greater risk than the general population.

According to Kathleen Mott, Director of the SCRAPPI project, "There are now specific risk-reducing strategies that a woman with increased risk can implement and there are accurate genetic tests to check for BRCA gene mutations. What has been missing is a cost-effective way to assess the risk of large numbers of women."

Using small notebook computers, women take five minutes to complete a cancer risk assessment questionnaire that when analyzed calculates the risk of a BRCA mutation and the lifetime risk of developing



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breast cancer. Once a woman's individual risk is known, she can be counseled as to health care options appropriate for her level of risk.

As seen in several other nationwide centers, the majority of women were not found to have an increased risk but for the 3% that SCRAPPI identified with an increased risk, the information and education they are receiving would likely not have been delivered without the program.

This is what three women who have completed the program said about it:

"Thank you for having this program. I thought I might be at increased risk but I did not know there was anything I could do about it." Sylvia S.

"I was told that I should consider genetic testing with my second breast cancer. After going through the assessment and risk consultation offered through SCRAPPI, I made the decision to be tested for the breast cancer genes and learned that I have a BRCA2 mutation. Having this valuable information has helped me to move forward and make educated choices on my health care. The free services I received through the program made a big difference in my life. Thank you." Marilyn D.

"My sister learned she had a BRCA mutation after she got breast cancer this year. She told me I could have the mutation too. I came through the risk assessment program, went through genetic counseling and found out that I qualified for a free test through another special program. The fact that everything was free made it possible for me to get the information and the BRCA test. I now have a much better understanding of how to take care of myself."

Anonymous Sonoma County Resident

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The North Bay Cancer Alliance (NBCA) was founded in 2005 and is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Sonoma County, California. It is governed by a nine member community-based volunteer board of directors. Our primary service area is the five counties in the San Francisco North Bay, which includes Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Lake, and Mendocino.

NBCA was created to be a cancer oriented resource and service organization. Specifically, our objectives are to educate people in our community about early cancer detection methods and how to minimize the risks of cancer as well as to provide tools to help patients cope with the realities of cancer. In addition, NBCA will promote ongoing local clinical research which can offer patients in our community treatments otherwise only available in large metropolitan cities.