



Think Pink: October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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10/20/2010 - **RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany** -- "I like it on the dining room table," reads a friend's Facebook status.

Does this sound familiar? While at first glance this statement may sound inappropriate, it's actually part of a large campaign of women sharing where they place their purse.

An addition to the traditional pink ribbons recognized throughout the world as a symbol of Breast Cancer awareness, this social media campaign aims to grab people's attention in a unique way, all with the intent of raising awareness for this important cause. But it's certainly not the only way people can recognize their support during Breast Cancer Awareness month this October.

Along with simply wearing the color pink, donning a pink ribbon and posting messages to social media sites, organizations throughout the world acknowledge Breast Cancer Awareness Month by marketing special sales, products and events that allow donations charitable cancer causes.

Here at Ramstein, more than 300 Kaiserslautern Military Community members came together in a more active show of support, through a 5K fun run Oct. 15 sponsored by the 86th Medical Group.

"The run was a great success, and it was good to see the support that people are willing to give," said Capt. Julie Skinner, 86th MDG health care integrator.

As the runners lined up, a clear and obvious color was observed -- pink. From T-shirts to pink wigs, runners of all ages donned the color in some truly unique ways to show support of the cause. More specifically, runners of all genders came out to support what is often mistakenly considered just a female issue.

Although the majority of breast cancer awareness is marketed towards women, professionals stress that men should be equally concerned with breast cancer.

"Husbands should actively encourage their wives to get their annual mammogram to help maintain their health and their relationship," said Captain Skinner. "Breast cancer and the necessary treatments can interfere with the most intimate parts of a relationship."

It has also been found that men can be diagnosed with breast cancer as well.

"It is a rarity, but many people are unaware that men can be affected by breast cancer as well," said Capt. Skinner. "Nearly two percent of all breast cancer cases are men."

Breast cancer can affect anybody, which is why everyone should be familiar with their body and what is normal for them.

This message was footstomped by cancer survivor and guest speaker for the event, Col. Tamara Averett-Brauer, 86th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron commander, who's been cancer free for nine years.

"Take those mammograms seriously, because my mammogram saved my life," said Colonel Averett-Brauer. "Know your body, and know it well."

According to the National Cancer Institute, it is recommended that women 40 years and older should get a



Members from the Kaiserslautern Military Community gather to celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October. The 5K fun run was held at the 435th Construction and Training Squadron site and featured guest speaker Col. Tamara A. Averett-Brauer, 86th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron commander, who is now nine years cancer free. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Airman 1st Class Ciara M. Travis)

mammogram every one to two years. Also, women who have had breast cancer or other breast problems or a family history of breast cancer should consider getting a mammogram before the age of 40 at a more frequent rate.

"Active duty, dependents, retirees and their beneficiaries can receive mammograms at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center on a self-referral or walk-in basis, but it's preferred that a woman makes an appointment with their primary care manager after receiving a physical exam," said Lt. Col. (Dr.) Charles Tujo, former LRMC chief of women's imaging. "However, a woman over 40, or with first degree relative (mother or sister), with breast cancer may call for a self-referral examination."

The National Cancer Institute also highly recommends contacting a doctor if any usual changes in breasts are observed.

For those looking for a way to actively show support as part of Breast Cancer Awareness month, you can donate to a number of organizations related to breast cancer through the Combined Federal Campaign-Overseas currently running through Dec. 4. Check out www.cfcoverseas.org for a listing of organizations and more information on how to donate.

Also, another 5K run is scheduled for 9 a.m. Oct. 23 at the track near Gate 4 at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. The run is open to all military and DOD civilians. Registration will be held from 8 to 8:45 a.m. at the LRMC track. For more information, call DSN: 590-7317.

And if nothing else, just wear pink. What better time of year to don your best pink tie or go as bold as a full-pink outfit. Since the early 1990s the color itself has held significant meaning around the world and is a simple way anyone can show support for the cause.