

# NEWS RELEASE



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Cheryl Brown speaks with women at a Breast Cancer Seminar at Halifax HealthLink. She shared fashion tips for those who have lost their hair due to cancer treatments.

## CHERYL BROWN IS TESTIMONIAL FOR MAMMOGRAMS

*Roanoke Rapids Resident is Breast Cancer Survivor*

**ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC –October 29, 2008—Cheryl Brown has a cause.**

It is to tell women that early detection is the key to surviving cancer, and Cheryl knows that all too well.

"I used to have a mammogram every year," she said, "but then I missed a couple of years. My physician (Meena Sekaran, MD), urged me to have a mammogram.

"I did and afterwards, I had an ultrasound screening and then a biopsy. I was told I had cancer," Brown recalled. "First, I was speechless. Then, I began crying. I was afraid. I had to rely on others and have faith." She remembers sitting in church just before Christmas. "I was wondering if it was going to be my last Christmas," She recalled.

Almost a year later, she is a survivor. She underwent a lumpectomy and then chemotherapy and radiation. "I have a new appreciation about what is important in life," Cheryl says. "That is family, friends and church."

Today she is cancer free, although she understands there is a chance of reoccurrence. "Now I am well aware of how important an annual mammogram is. You can bet I won't miss another one."

Brown speaks passionately about the importance of a mammogram. While October is breast cancer awareness month, the most important thing is that woman over the age of 40 have a mammogram once a year, she says.

In addition to mammograms, there are other keys to early detection, says Terry Mason, supervisor of Halifax Women's Imaging Center.

- Conduct monthly self-exams. Check to see if the breast tissue has changed. If the breasts have changed in appearance or if any unfamiliar lumps have developed, see your physician.
- Annual check ups. Women should have an annual physician examination.
- Become educated. The more you know about breast cancer, the better prepared you are.

With 20 years experience in the mammography field, Mason is passionate about protecting women's health. "I believe many women are scared to find out if they have cancer," she says... "They may say they don't have the time or the money, or that they don't want to experience the discomfort of a screening, but many are afraid." Unfortunately, she adds "if there is a cancer, it will eventually show itself and then it could be too late."

Halifax Regional, the Northampton/Halifax Health Department, the Rural Health Group and the North Carolina Breast and Cervical Cancer Program help women without funds to obtain mammograms. "There is no excuse for not having a mammogram," said Mason.

For her part, Brown has begun telling her story to others. She recently spoke to a group of women at Halifax HealthLink about ways to enhance their appearance after cancer treatments. She's available to speak to other community organizations.

"It's all about attitude," Brown explains when talking about difficult situations in life. "You put your attitude on altitude and you can do anything."

To schedule your mammogram, call your physician or the Halifax Regional Scheduling Department at 535-8888.

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#### **About the Halifax Regional**

*Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 206-beds, including psychiatric and nursery.*

*A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit [www.halifaxregional.us](http://www.halifaxregional.us).*