WHY ARE MORE AND MORE OF US GETTING BREAST CANCER?

An epidemic of breast cancer is surging across Europe

The No More Breast Cancer Campaign – an affiliation of organisations – is the only UK campaign making the links between breast cancer and environmental pollution. We want government, mainstream cancer charities, and industry to acknowledge these links and to put prevention at the heart of the breast cancer debate.

No More Breast Cancer Campaign
info@nomorebreastcancer.org.uk
www.nomorebreastcancer.org.uk
Tel: 0845 680 1322

No More Breast Cancer is a campaign of Breast Cancer UK. Registered charity number 1088047.
The No More Breast Cancer Campaign argues that we need to face up to the fact of environmental pollution with regard to breast cancer. Policy-makers need to acknowledge that lifelong, low-level exposure to a toxic cocktail of carcinogens and hormone disruptors in the home, workplace and environment may be linked to rising levels of the disease.

Our campaign aims to inform women that, while we need ever more improved methods of detection, breast cancer can be viewed as a preventable, and not an inevitable disease. We need a national strategy that addresses this missing part of the breast cancer debate.

We challenge government, mainstream cancer charities and industry – who currently refute this link – to acknowledge it and act upon the ‘precautionary principle.’

Breast cancer cases have reached record levels.¹

The statistics are shocking. Breast cancer has now overtaken lung cancer to become the most diagnosed cancer in Europe. In the UK a woman’s lifetime risk of breast cancer is 1 in 9; the disease is diagnosed in 43,000 women a year; and kills more than 12,300 a year. Most women do not realise that fewer than 10 per cent of cases are due to genetic inheritance.

And breast cancer is increasing in all age-ranges, so is not solely a disease of ageing.

Advice to government from key experts is that breast cancer is a disease of ageing and other established ‘risk’ factors, some of which we can control and others which we cannot. These include: early puberty, late menopause; having children late in life or not having children at all, obesity and other ‘lifestyle’ factors such as drinking alcohol or smoking. The government is being urged to anticipate, and make provision for, greatly increased breast cancer disease levels in future decades. It is expected to become a widespread ‘non-fatal’ disease, to be controlled with medication.

Yet some studies have shown that fifty per cent or more of breast cancer cases are due to ‘unknown’ factors – in other words, they cannot be attributed to the recognised risk factors.

All agree that breast cancer is a ‘multi-factorial’ disease, in other words, caused by a lot of different factors working together: a complex interplay between our genes and our environment. Today we are living with over 100,000 man-made chemicals polluting our environment.

More than 500 (found in pesticides, plastics and detergents, for example) are thought to disrupt the hormones in the body and mimic the role of oestrogen – a hormone closely linked with the development of breast cancer.

No More Breast Cancer argues that these pollutants should and must be included in any risk factor analysis.

Over the past fifty years there has been considerable scientific concern about this association, and there is an extensive body of scientific research on the issue. Our report ‘Breast cancer: an environmental disease – the case for primary prevention’, available on our website, was a groundbreaking publication which drew this body of work together as a ‘right to know’ document for all women.

The No More Breast Cancer Campaign – an affiliation of UK organisations who share the same concern – rejects the ‘breast cancer forever’ scenario. We want harmful environmental pollutants that are damaging our health reduced and ultimately eliminated.

¹ References for all facts and statistics in this leaflet are on our website.