

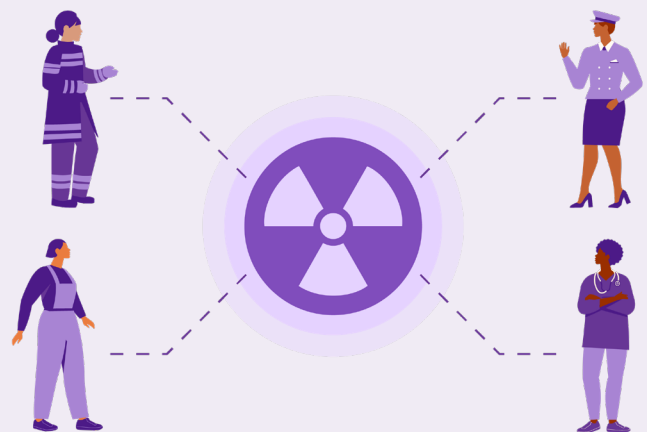
# Occupation

Certain occupations and workplaces have been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer. To reduce this risk, we should support workers' right to a healthy work environment by minimizing harmful exposures and conditions linked to breast cancer.

## Science Summary

Some occupations expose workers to hazards that increase breast cancer risk. Examples include flight attendants and healthcare workers (radiation), firefighters, agricultural, and industry workers (toxic chemicals), night shift workers (light at night), and sedentary workers (physical activity).

Some communities may be disproportionately affected by workplace exposures due to the cumulative effects of work in local industries, residential proximity to those industries, socio-economic status, and other social factors.



## What can I do for my own body and health?

The first step to protect yourself is to better understand your risk in the workplace. Always use protective equipment and follow safety protocols. Stay informed on regulations and work with your employer or union to advocate for safer conditions.

Some state programs are designed to identify hazardous circumstances and prevent injury and illness on the job (e.g., the California Safe Cosmetics Program (CDPH), the Hazard Evaluation System and Information Service (HESIS)).

"Sure, we can educate low-income workers, such as domestic workers, but a lot of Black and Latina women work for White people who insist they use conventional products that can be toxic."

**Elena from the Breast Cancer Plan Community Meeting  
San Francisco Bay Area**

## How can I navigate and get support with any systemic barriers to my health?

Workers need collective power to address workplace concerns effectively. Unions play a key role in educating, empowering, and lobbying for fair and safe work conditions. However, workers' education on the issue isn't enough if they lack the power to change their conditions. Women, especially those fearing job loss, are unlikely to have the power or security to advocate for workplace safety.

More studies that include a sufficiently large group of women and account for other important breast cancer risk factors are needed to better evaluate workplace exposures.

Ultimately, the best way to protect workers is to improve laws and regulations and equip state agencies with the authority and resources to enforce them. Given the power imbalance between corporations and workers, the government can provide the necessary protections.

"We must ensure that state and federal worker protection agencies have the authority, capacity, and strength to protect workers."

Here are some systems-level actions we can take to reduce occupational risks linked to breast cancer:



Develop, with worker input, industry-wide best practices, and policies to reduce workplace exposures to chemicals and other breast cancer risk factors.



Create culturally tailored educational programs, in collaboration with agricultural workers, on their workplace rights, safety regulations, and how to advocate for stronger protections to reduce hazardous exposures.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN  
MAKE CHANGE!**



Learn more and get involved.

**Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCPP)** is the leading science-based advocacy organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposure to toxic chemicals and other environmental exposures linked to the disease.



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