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## **Susan G. Komen for the Cure Commissions Study On Environmental Factors Linked To Breast Cancer**

### **Study Results Published in *Cancer*; Free Access Available to Mammary Carcinogens Database**

**DALLAS, TX – May 14, 2007** – Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the Silent Spring Institute announce the publication of *Environmental Factors in Breast Cancer*, the most comprehensive review to date of scientific research on environmental factors that may increase breast cancer risk. The study findings were released today in the scientific journal *Cancer*.

The state-of-the-science review, commissioned by Komen for the Cure and conducted by the Silent Spring Institute with additional researchers from Harvard University, Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the University of Southern California, collected and assessed existing scientific reports on potential links between specific environmental factors and breast cancer.

The researchers synthesized national and international data sources and identified 216 chemicals that cause breast tumors in animals. They used the information to create a unique searchable online database featuring detailed information on the carcinogens.

The database, accessible at [www.komen.org/environment](http://www.komen.org/environment), is available free of charge and will be of particular interest to researchers, healthcare workers, policymakers and some members of the public.

Komen for the Cure's goal in funding Silent Spring initiative was to determine where there is consensus within the scientific community on the relationship between environmental factors and breast cancer and where additional research or improved research methods are needed. Such information can help guide public policy and help funding organizations like Komen for the Cure to determine where to most effectively target research grant monies.

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The database includes references to 900 studies, 460 of which are human breast cancer studies that were critically evaluated by the research team. The studies measure breast cancer risk related to body size, physical activity, environmental pollutants, and prospective studies of diet. For each study, bibliographic information, key methods and findings, and a critical assessment of the strength of the evidence is included.

The database reveals that among the 216 compounds that cause breast tumors in animals:

- 73 have been present in consumer products or as contaminants in food
- 35 are air pollutants
- 25 have been associated with occupational exposures affecting more than 5,000 women a year
- 29 are produced in the United States in large amounts, often exceeding 1 million pounds per year.

“Komen is eager to see quality science yield answers that will eventually lead us to our ultimate goal of knowing how to prevent breast cancer. Commissioning this study is a step toward that goal, because it helps to determine what is known and what is not known about the possible link between certain environmental factors and the incidence of breast cancer,” said Hala Moddelmog, president and CEO of Komen for the Cure.

“While it is disturbing to learn that there are so many chemicals that may be linked to breast cancer, there is also a great opportunity to save thousands of lives by identifying those links, limiting exposure and finding safer alternatives. It is critical that we integrate this information into policies that govern chemical exposures,” said Julia G. Brody, PhD, executive director of the Silent Spring Institute.

The Silent Spring Institute study also examined lifestyle influences on breast cancer, such as physical activity and diet. The study results underscore the importance of regular, life-long physical activity to lower a woman’s risk of developing breast cancer. The study concluded that further research is needed to determine the relationship between dietary factors and breast cancer risk.

In response to the study’s findings, Komen is now funding the development of new and innovative models for researching breast cancer and environmental risk factors. Komen also continues to fund environmental projects as part of its investigator-initiated grants program and is actively looking for ways to partner with other research groups such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Environmental Health Labs.

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Susan G. Komen for the Cure is committed to continuing its involvement in the investigation of environmental factors related to breast cancer and is funding a second phase of the Silent Spring Institute study. Phase two focuses on the toxicology of endocrine disruptors, perinatal and early life exposures, non-hormonal pharmaceuticals, tobacco smoke, occupational exposures, exposure to light at night, and stress and social factors.

“As an advocacy organization, Komen for the Cure is committed to educating people about what we know about breast cancer today, while continuously searching for evidence that will provide answers for tomorrow,” said Modellmog.

*Cancer* is a journal of the American Cancer Society.

### **About Susan G. Komen for the Cure**

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure and launched the global breast cancer movement. Today, Komen for the Cure is the world’s largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures. Thanks to events like the Komen Race for the Cure, we have invested nearly \$1 billion to fulfill our promise, becoming the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer in the world. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, breast health or breast cancer, visit [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) or call 1-800 I’M AWARE.

### **About Silent Spring Institute**

Founded in 1994, Silent Spring Institute is a non-profit research organization dedicated to studying the environment's effect on women's health, with an emphasis on breast cancer. Silent Spring's groundbreaking research on endocrine disrupting compounds and pollution in homes has been published in *Environmental Science & Technology*, *Environmental Health Perspectives*, and other scientific journals. Silent Spring Institute scientists work in partnership with physicians and public health advocates, and researchers at Brown University, Harvard University, SUNY- Stony Brook, and elsewhere. Funding for Silent Spring Institute's research is by grants from the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, private foundations, and individual donors.

For more information, please visit [www.silentspring.org](http://www.silentspring.org).

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