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האגודה למלחמה בסרט - 90336						

Israel sees sharp drop in breast cancer deaths in past decade

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The last decade has seen a sharp drop in deaths from breast cancer in Israel, according to new data published by the Health Ministry and the Israel Cancer Association. Some 87 percent of Jewish woman survived the disease five years after being diagnosed, compared to 79 percent of Arab women.

The data was published a week before the ICA launches its annual fund-raising drive.

Today, there are some 19,493 women in Israel who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, have recovered, or are still struggling with the

disease. Some 79% of sufferers are women over the age of 50. This data places Israel fifth among OECD nations in terms of mortality, below countries such as Denmark, Belgium, Ireland and Hungary.

Ahead of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the ICA conducted a survey of 600 women in Israel - Jews, religious Jews and Arabs - regarding their lifestyle. The survey found that a large percentage of the women do not observe a lifestyle that would decrease their chance of developing breast cancer. Thus, 58 percent of ultra-

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Orthodox Jewish women were overweight, compared to 41 percent of Arab Women and 50 percent of all Jewish women. Secular women were more likely to smoke and consume alcohol, according to the survey, while Arab women do little exercise.

Many women who participated in the survey were aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle, especially regarding smoking and nutrition. Some 17 percent of Haredi women

said that prayers were among the factors that help decrease the risk of developing cancer, while 11 percent of Arab women saw cancer as the will of God, believing that nothing can be done to prevent it.

Still, all three different classes of women interviewed were aware of the importance of early detection. Among women over 50 who took part in the survey, 94 percent of Jews and almost 90 percent of Arabs said they underwent mammograms. Among those who didn't, the main reason was fear of the results and the pain involved. Arab women mostly feared unwelcome results.