

Pink ribbon signifies awareness and support for breast cancer

These days ribbons are worn for many different causes. Red signifies AIDS awareness. A yellow ribbon has long represented support for armed forces. However, one of the most prominent ribbon colors is pink, which aims to raise awareness of and support for breast cancer.

Pink is a color that is uniquely feminine, and it also represents a person full of health and vibrancy; think of little babies pink with life. Pink is also a color that seems the complete antithesis of cancer, and thusly inspires hope for renewed health and survival.

There is some controversy surrounding the origins of the breast cancer mascot - the pink ribbon. There are also suggestions that the ribbon was intended to be peach and not pink.

In 1992, just about every organization started using ribbons to raise awareness. The New York Times actually dubbed 1992 "The Year of the Ribbon." Alexandra Penney, the then-editor of Self magazine, wanted to create a ribbon for the publication's second annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month issue. The previous year she had worked with cosmetics giant Estee Lauder. Evelyn Lauder, the senior corporate vice president, was herself a breast cancer survivor. Penney thought a collaboration between the magazine and Lauder could see a ribbon on cosmetic counters across the nation, and help sell a few magazines in the

process.

The trouble was Penney had read a story about a 68-year-old woman, Charlotte Haley, who was producing handmade ribbons in her home. Haley had a number of people in her immediate family who had battled breast cancer and her handmade "peach" ribbons intended to raise awareness about the limited government funds being used for breast cancer research. Haley's message was spreading by word of mouth.

Penney and Lauder contacted Haley and wanted to further collaborate on the peach ribbon theme. However, Haley didn't want to be involved, saying the effort would be too commercial. She refused to turn over rights to the use of the peach ribbon. As a result, Penney consulted with attorneys who said to come up with another color, and pink was eventually chosen.

Pink had already been associated with breast cancer in the past. Just a few years earlier, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation had given out pink visors to its "Race for the Cure" participants. It had also created a pink ribbon.

The pink ribbon quickly took off by leaps and bounds. Millions were distributed by Estee Lauder. There are many philanthropic and commercial businesses who now use the pink ribbon in their breast cancer marketing plans.

Every October, women are urged to don pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. One can find the pink ribbon adorning everything from cereal boxes to cans of cleanser.

Many embrace the pink ribbon as a symbol of hope, one that has done its share of work toward spreading the word about the need for more breast cancer awareness and research.

Simple solutions to boost your energy

Increasing daily energy levels is a goal for many men and women. Many adults are increasingly looking to energy drinks or highly caffeinated beverages like coffee to get the job done, while others are fearful that such beverages, though effective at improving energy levels, could have an adverse effect on their overall health.

For those who feel energy drinks or another cup of coffee is not the ideal solution to increasing their energy levels, consider the following tips.

* Exercise. While it might seem counterintuitive to exercise if you're feeling fatigued, that fatigue might very well be a result of lack of exercise. Daily exercise helps increase energy levels and improve mood. Something as simple as taking a walk during a lunch break can vastly improve energy levels.

* Drink plenty of water. Dehydration can make people feel lethargic. Drinking the recommended daily amount of water can boost energy levels, especially after a workout when the body often craves fluids.

* Carefully monitor sugar intake. Sweet foods with lots of sugar will provide an initial energy boost. However, that boost is fleeting, and blood sugar levels will rapidly drop after it. Instead of sugary snacks, select whole grain foods, which slowly and steadily increase the body's energy levels.

* Check magnesium levels. Constant feelings of fatigue could be indicative of a magnesium deficiency. Studies have shown that women with magnesium deficiencies expend more energy to do physical tasks than they did when their magnesium levels were restored. Almonds, hazelnuts and cashews are good sources of magnesium, as are whole grains and fish.

* Don't skip meals. Exhausted or fatigued men and women are often busy at work, which commonly results in missed meals. Skipping meals, according to studies published in the journal Nutritional Health revealed, leads to greater feelings of fatigue by day's end. Make eating all your meals a priority, and energy levels are likely to improve.

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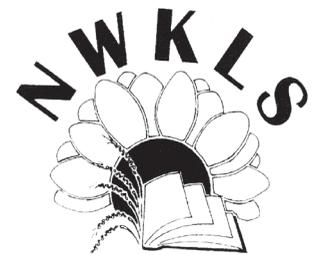
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