# Tina Knowles reveals breast cancer diagnosis to highlight importance of early screening



At the age of 71, Tina Knowles, renowned fashion designer, businesswoman, and mother of global superstar Beyoncé, disclosed a significant personal health challenge: her breast cancer diagnosis. The discovery, made during a routine mammogram in 2023, found two tumours in her left breast—one benign and the other malignant—culminating in a diagnosis of stage 1 breast cancer. Following surgery, Knowles is now reported to be cancer-free.

Initially hesitant to reveal her diagnosis, Knowles contemplated omitting this chapter from her forthcoming memoir, "Matriarch," slated for release in 2025. Known for her preference for privacy, she ultimately decided to share her experience with a purpose: to educate and inspire others, particularly women juggling busy lives, about the critical importance of regular cancer screenings.

A crucial detail in her story was the timing of her diagnosis. Knowles acknowledged that her cancer might have been detected at an even earlier stage—stage 0—had she kept her mammogram appointments uninterrupted. The COVID-19 pandemic caused her to delay rescheduling a mammogram for nearly four years, a common experience for many during the health crisis. Her sister, herself a breast cancer survivor, reminded her that adherence to regular screening schedules might have revealed the cancer before it began invading surrounding tissue.

Knowles' tumour was small and slow-growing, which contributed to a positive outcome. Yet, her experience highlights key medical considerations around early detection of breast cancer, notably the distinction and significance of stage 0 cancer. Stage 0, also known as carcinoma in situ, describes the earliest form of cancer where abnormal cells remain confined to their original location without invading neighbouring tissues. In breast cancer, ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) is the most common form of stage 0, with abnormal cells restricted to the milk ducts.

Generally symptomless, stage 0 cancers are predominantly found through screening methods such as mammograms. While breast cancer is the most familiar context for stage 0 cancer, similar non-invasive changes can occur in other organs, such as the cervix or colon.

The medical community is engaged in ongoing dialogue about whether stage 0 cancers should be classified strictly as "cancer." Some specialists advocate for terms like "precancer" or "non-invasive cancer" to communicate the lower risk these abnormal cells pose. However, a proportion of untreated DCIS cases—up to 40% according to research—may progress to invasive breast cancer over time, prompting many doctors to recommend some form of treatment despite uncertainties around which cases will worsen.

Treatment strategies for stage 0 breast cancer are typically less aggressive than those for advanced stages and usually personalised. Options include lumpectomy (removal of the affected area), mastectomy (removal of the entire breast), radiation therapy, and hormone therapy for hormone receptor-positive cancers. An alternative approach, active surveillance, entails close monitoring without immediate intervention, although it remains controversial due to inherent risks.

The prognosis for stage 0 breast cancer is highly favourable, with five-year survival rates nearing 99%. Most patients diagnosed at this stage do not experience recurrence, a testament to the effectiveness of early detection and treatment. Nonetheless, the increasing rate of stage 0 cancer diagnoses has prompted discussions about potential over-diagnosis and over-treatment.

The emotional impact of a stage 0 diagnosis can be significant. Patients often feel a mixture of relief and anxiety about the implications and necessity of treatment. Knowles herself described the diagnosis as an "emotional rollercoaster," finding strength in the support of her daughters and close friends.

Screening remains a cornerstone in combating cancer by identifying disease at treatable stages. Despite debates surrounding overtreatment, early detection offers individuals choices and the possibility of preventing disease progression.

Justin Stebbing, a Professor of Biomedical Sciences at Anglia Ruskin University, whose research focuses on distinguishing which early abnormalities require treatment, highlights the ongoing efforts to refine diagnostic and treatment protocols.

The Independent is reporting that Tina Knowles' public sharing of her breast cancer journey underscores the vital role of regular health screenings, especially as people navigate the delayed medical care consequences linked to the pandemic. Her story exemplifies the importance of timely detection, personalised care, and robust support systems in managing breast cancer.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/729803/matriarch-by-tina-knowles-with-kevin-oleary/> - This page provides information about Tina Knowles' memoir 'Matriarch,' scheduled for release on April 15, 2025, detailing her life story and experiences, including her battle with breast cancer.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/02c4f2ea8d2a4d028ac3efa01c1f0587> - This article discusses Tina Knowles' memoir 'Matriarch,' highlighting her personal journey, including her breast cancer diagnosis and recovery, and her decision to share her story to inspire others.
4. <https://www.wsls.com/entertainment/2024/10/29/tina-knowles-to-tell-her-story-in-matriarch-a-memoir-scheduled-for-next-year/> - This article announces Tina Knowles' upcoming memoir 'Matriarch,' scheduled for release in 2025, which will include her experiences with breast cancer and the importance of regular screenings.
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6. <https://www.apnews.com/article/3375d78d70f6d81194671837a7d4b967> - This article reports that Oprah Winfrey selected Tina Knowles' memoir 'Matriarch' as her latest book club pick, highlighting Knowles' journey, including her battle with breast cancer.
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