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from Judee,
our Parish

April 20, 2008

I've been asked to put something in the bulletin about Inflammatory Breast Cancer again. I hope that a short review helps. This is a very aggressive form of breast cancer that does NOT always show up on a mammogram so please don't ignore any of the symptoms if you should have one or more of them. For more information, please go to www.ibcresearch.org

One or more of the following are Typical Symptoms of IBC:

- Swelling, usually sudden, sometimes a cup size in a few days
- Itching
- Pink, red, or dark colored area (called erythema) sometimes with texture similar to the skin of an orange (called peau d'orange)
- Ridges and thickened areas of the skin
- Nipple retraction
- Nipple discharge, may or may not be bloody
- Breast is warm to the touch
- Breast pain (from a constant ache to stabbing pain)
- Change in color and texture of the areola

If you suddenly develop a lump or mass, have it checked immediately. We have one reported case where a 9x8x5cm lump developed in only three weeks.

Use caution when relying on the interpretations and reports of the mammogram or ultrasound! Inflammatory breast cancer usually grows in nests or sheets, rather than as a confined solid tumor. IBC may not be detected using either mammography or ultrasonography. Increased breast density compared to prior mammograms should be considered suspicious. **Remember: You don't have to have a lump to have breast cancer.**

God bless you and have a great week!