

How much of your 'pink' purchase goes to fighting breast cancer?

By Jill Kelley, Staff Writer

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One way to support breast cancer research and raise awareness for the disease is to purchase “pink” products, most of which donate portions of their proceeds to the cause.

But, like with any purchase, it is wise not to spend your money blindly — even when it is for charity.

According to Barbara Brenner, executive director of Breast Cancer Action, there is no minimum amount of money that has to be donated to breast cancer research for it to qualify as a “pink” product.

“There are no legal standards,” Brenner said. “There are no laws.”

Therefore, it is always wise to ascertain how the purchase supports the cause and what percentage of the sale goes to its funding, especially if you are choosing to purchase that item primarily because of the fundraising angle.

Peggy Isenogle, executive director of mission at the Susan G. Komen for the Cure of Greater Cincinnati, agreed that consumers should not to just buy something that has a pink ribbon on it.

“The pink ribbon is owned by no one,” said Isenogle, adding that that is why Komen’s pink ribbon is distinctive. “Komen is very mindful of products they select to be cause-related.”

Isenogle also advised people to make sure they believe in a company’s mission before donating to it.

Breast Cancer Action has a program called Think Before You Pink (ThinkBeforeYouPink.org), which recommends taking some time and asking a few questions before you purchase “pink” products.

Brenner said to consider whether the amount going to the charity is meaningful to you, where the money is going and whether there is a cap on how much goes to charity.

“The cap is a problem,” said Brenner, adding that a company might meet that cap amount early in the year, and then not be obligated to devote any of the money from your purchase to that cause.

Brenner said another question you should ask is whether that product is bad for your health.

She noted that some industries are selling “pink” products that can actually contribute to people’s risk of getting the disease. She cited some automobile, cosmetic, alcohol and dairy companies in this category.

Last year, Think Before You Pink took on General Mills in regards to one of its products. Yoplait had been running a pink-lid initiative and was raising money for the fight against breast cancer; but Yoplait was being made with the hormone rBGH.

That hormone, the group noted, is suspected of increasing a person’s risk of breast cancer.

Think Before You Pink launched an online campaign asking General Mills to “put a lid” on the hormone’s use.

General Mills responded and announced they were going rBGH-free.

Isenogle said this is a good example of both the organization and General Mills working together for consumers.

“General Mills was very quick to react,” Isenogle said, “and their product has a definite track record in raising a substantial amount of money that is being put to work in local communities.”

It is good to remember as well, that all of these “pink” products are just the window dressing to the cause. If you are buying a “pink” product purely because it will help fund the cause, it is good to consider whether your money would be better served with a direct donation.

However, if you would like to buy a “pink” product as your way to support breast cancer research and awareness, there are many good options to choose from.

Here are some products that are on the less expensive side, that donate a good amount to research and are valuable in their own right.

Find this article at:

<http://www.daytondailynews.com/lifestyle/pink/how-much-of-your-pink-purchase-goes-to-fighting-breast-cancer-336685.html>

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