



## Think Before You Pink

In October, pink ribbons abound — on hats, on sweaters, on yogurt cups and cereal boxes and granola bars. It's wonderful to see so many people supporting breast cancer research and supporting those who have been diagnosed with the illness.

But as with all high-profile awareness campaigns, it's important to evaluate before you buy, and make sure that your dollars really are making a difference. Think Before You Pink, a branch of the Breast Cancer Action campaign, urges consumers to ask these four questions before they pay for something pink.

1. **“Does any money from this purchase go to support breast cancer programs? How much?”** In 2010, consumers likely thought that a portion of their purchase of Dansko's pink ribbon clogs went to a breast cancer program. However, purchase of the pink ribbon clogs was not connected to Dansko's donation — none of the portion of the sales went toward their already set donation of \$25,000 to Susan G. Komen for the Cure. No matter whether or not you bought the clogs, their donation was the same.
2. **“What organization will get the money? What will they do with the funds, and how do these programs turn the tide of the breast cancer epidemic?”** Many companies that sell pink ribbon products and donate a percentage of each sale to breast cancer programs fail to indicate which of the many different breast cancer organizations will get the money. Furthermore, the consumer is left to trust that these organizations are engaged in work that is meaningful and makes the greatest difference.
3. **“Is there a ‘cap’ on the amount the company will donate? Has this maximum donation already been met? Can you tell?”** In 2010, Reebok marketed a line of pink ribbon emblazoned footwear and apparel at prices ranging from \$50 to \$100. Though it heavily promoted the fact that some of their pink ribbon product sales would be donated to the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade, they set a limit of \$750,000, regardless of how many items were sold, and there was no mechanism in place to alert consumers once the maximum donation had been met.
4. **“Does this purchase put you or someone you love at risk for exposure to toxins linked to breast cancer? What is the company doing to ensure that its products are not contributing to the breast cancer epidemic?”** Each year, the Avon Foundation puts on multi-day breast cancer walks in cities nationwide. But Avon Products has long been targeted by activists to remove from its cosmetics cancer-linked ingredients like methylparaben, a chemical that has been found to increase breast cancer risk and interfere with breast cancer treatment.”

