

Breast Cancer (BC)

Understanding this disease and reimagining the future of care



For more than 35 years, Novartis has been committed to tackling breast cancer with bold science, collaboration, and a passion for transforming patient care.

Approximately 1 in 8 women (13%) in the United States will develop breast cancer at some point in their life, making it the most common cancer diagnosed among women in the United States.¹

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the breast tissue change and divide uncontrolled, typically resulting in a lump or mass.² Nearly 70% of breast cancer tumors have the HR+/HER2- subtype, which means their growth is driven by hormones like estrogen and progesterone.³

With a deep understanding of the mechanism of the disease, and by listening and working with the patient community and those who care for them, we aspire to continue reimagining medicine for people touched by breast cancer, ultimately helping to improve their outcomes.

Addressing risk of recurrence after an early-stage diagnosis



Approximately 90% of breast cancer cases in the United States are diagnosed early (stages I-III), which means the disease is localized in the breast.⁴ Following an early breast cancer (eBC) diagnosis, patients work with their treatment team to come up with an appropriate plan with the end goal of “ringing the bell” and being declared in remission or “cancer free.” However, despite available treatments, 1 in 9 patients diagnosed with stage II and III HR+/HER2- tumors will see their cancer come back within 3 years of diagnosis.⁵ This happens because, even after undergoing initial treatment, some undetected cancer cells may be left behind with the potential to grow exponentially.⁶ The risk is persistent, potentially affecting more people later in their journey.

Most of the time, when cancer comes back, it does so as incurable, metastatic disease.⁷ Understanding that each patient’s risk of having cancer come back after initial treatment is essential in navigating both short- and long-term approaches to care. This includes the potential need for adjuvant therapy (also known as maintenance therapy) as part of a holistic plan to reduce the risk of cancer returning after finalizing active treatment.⁸

Our commitment to patients

We recognize that navigating life after an eBC diagnosis is hard, so we have worked with key partners in the advocacy community to build a space of support, helping patients move forward with confidence, equipped with better understanding about their risk of cancer coming back. To learn more visit [UnderstandeBCRisk.com](https://www.understandeBCrisk.com).

Any breast cancer diagnosis can be difficult for patients, their families, and loved ones, but a diagnosis of advanced or metastatic disease can be especially devastating. Metastatic breast cancer (mBC) occurs when the disease spreads beyond the breast, even after initial treatment.⁹

There is no cure for mBC, yet scientists are making real progress in cancer research and developing treatments. Novartis continues to be committed to the mBC community, focusing on the priority for patients to live longer, and remain able to enjoy things in life they love.

The *More Than Just Words* Initiative, Promoting Equity in Breast Cancer Care

Black women are 41% more likely to die from breast cancer than their white counterparts in the United States. Novartis believes that all breast cancer patients, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, should

have the same opportunity to experience a “Life filled with Living”.¹⁰ That is why we launched *More Than Just Words*, a multiyear commitment to promote health equity in breast cancer care, where there is significant unmet need, to transform outcomes for all patients.

Novartis is committed to creating solutions and funding programs to improve breast cancer care for Black women.

Stephanie's Breast Cancer Experience

Listen in as Stephanie shares more about her breast cancer care experience.

Latoya's Breast Cancer Experience

Listen in as Latoya shares more about her breast cancer care experience.

Implicit Bias Training

Learn more about the *More Than Just Words* virtual reality implicit bias training.

References

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