

Fighting for Treatments



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to Extend Our Lives

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Get the Facts



Metastatic Breast Cancer Network is a national, non-profit patient advocacy group dedicated to the unique concerns of the women and men living with metastatic breast cancer.

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KNOW THE FACTS

WHAT is Metastatic Breast Cancer?

Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC), also known as advanced or Stage IV breast cancer, is cancer that has spread outside of the breast to other organs such as bones, liver, lung or brain. This process is called metastasis. Although the cancer has invaded another organ, it is still classified and treated as breast cancer.

WHO gets Metastatic Breast Cancer?

No one brings metastatic disease on themselves. The sad truth is that anyone who has had an earlier stage of breast cancer can have a metastatic recurrence and some women have metastatic disease on their initial diagnosis of cancer.

WHY does cancer metastasize?

Researchers can't predict who will get metastatic disease, but they're working on answers. Early detection is important, but it is not a cure and does not guarantee MBC will not occur in the future.

WHAT is the main difference between early stage breast cancer and MBC?

MBC is treatable, but no longer curable. Treatment is lifelong and focuses on preventing spread of the disease and managing symptoms. The goal is for patients to live productive and comfortable lives for as long as possible.

HOW is MBC treated?

There are many different kinds of MBC. Treatment choices for Stage IV are guided by the presence of hormone (ER/PR) and HER2 receptors, location and extent of metastasis, and previous treatments. Patients may be on either targeted therapy or systemic chemotherapy. Radiation and surgery are also sometimes used.

IS MBC a chronic disease?

Not yet, but that is an important goal. As researchers identify more and better treatments, MBC could become a chronic disease like diabetes or HIV/AIDS, where patients can be stable on medications for 20 or more years. Finding better treatments is key, while the search for a cure continues.

HOW many people die from breast cancer each year?

In the U.S., approximately 40,000 people a year die from metastatic breast cancer—no one dies from early stage breast cancer. This number has been unchanged in the last 10 years, so much work still needs to be done!

WHAT is MBCN?

MBCN, Metastatic Breast Cancer Network, is a national, independent, patient advocacy group dedicated to the unique concerns of the 155,000 women and men living with metastatic breast cancer in the U.S.

WHO formed the Organization?

MBCN was founded in 2004 by two women, Nina Schulman and Jane Soyer. When diagnosed with advanced breast cancer, they felt isolated and stigmatized. Their belief that breast cancer should not be viewed as a disease from which one is either a 'survivor' or to which one has succumbed, fueled their desire to advocate for change.

WHAT is MBCN's mission?

MBCN strives to raise awareness of metastatic breast cancer, to educate patients to advocate for themselves and to fight for treatments to extend life, while the search for a cure continues.

WHAT does MBCN do?

- Hosts programs about MBC including an annual conference at a major cancer center.
- Promotes October 13 annually as Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day, designated by Congress in 2009, after a successful lobbying campaign by MBCN.
- Provides free information and brochures to newly diagnosed patients.
- Advocates for more awareness of the challenges of metastatic disease and more treatments that will extend lives.
- Serves as the VOICE of the metastatic breast cancer community, providing information and resources through the website, Facebook and publications.