OUR MISSION

The Breast Cancer Charities of America exists to eliminate breast cancer as a life-threatening illness. We bring together organizations representing all health and social service disciplines in the commitment to establish new and unprecedented levels of effectiveness in resources, education, advocacy and support. BCCA is the only non-profit bringing the ‘integrated cancer care’ message to women of America.

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BREAST CANCER STAGES: WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Over 40,000 women will die each year from breast cancer. It’s important to get annual screenings to catch breast cancer in its early stages. Early detection does save lives!

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

HR = Hormone receptor
HR+ means tumor cells have receptors for the hormones estrogen or progesterone, which can promote the growth of HR+ tumors.
HER2 = Human epidermal growth factor receptor
HER2+ means tumor cells overexpress (make high levels of) a protein, called HER2/neu, which has been shown to be associated with certain aggressive types of breast cancer

HR+/HER2-

73% of all breast cancer cases
Best prognosis
Most common subtype in every race and age

HR-/HER2-

13% of all breast cancer cases
Poor prognosis
Non-Hispanic blacks have highest rate of this subtype at every age

HR+/HER2+

10% of all breast cancer cases
Little geographic variation by state

HR-/HER2+

5% of all breast cancer cases
Lowest rates for all races and ethnicities

Stage 0
Described as non-invasive.
In this stage, there is no sign of cancerous or non-cancerous abnormal cells.

Stage 1
Described as invasive. This cancer is broken down into subcategories: IA and IB.

IA - The tumor measures up to 2 centimeters AND the cancer has not spread beyond the breast
IB - There is no tumor in breast, but small group of cancerous cells found in lymph nodes OR small tumor in breast and small group of cells in lymph nodes

Stage 2
Stage II is also broken down into two categories: IIA and IIB.

IIA - No tumor, cancer found in 1-3 axillary/breastbone lymph nodes OR tumor measures 2cm and has spread to axillary lymph nodes OR tumor is < 2cm and has not spread
IIB - Tumor has grown < 2cm but not larger than 5cm. Small groups of BC cells are found in lymph nodes OR cancer spread to 1-3 axillary/breastbone lymph nodes OR tumor has grown < 5cm

Stage 3
Stage III is divided into three subcategories: IIA, IIB, and IIC.

IIIA - No tumor found within breast, or tumor could be any size. Cancer is found in 4-9 axillary/breastbone lymph nodes OR tumor has grown to be < 5cm and small group of cells have been found in lymph nodes OR tumor is < 5cm and cancer has spread to 1-3 axillary lymph nodes
IIB - Tumor could be any size and has spread to chest wall or skin of breast and caused swelling AND cancer has spread up to 9 axillary lymph nodes OR may have spread to breastbone lymph nodes
IIC - There could be no sign of cancer in breast, or if tumor is present, it could be any size AND cancer has spread to at least 10 axillary lymph nodes OR cancer has spread to lymph nodes above/below collarbone

Stage 4
Breast cancer that is invasive and has spread beyond the breast. Now considered Metastatic

*sources: www.breastcancer.org