

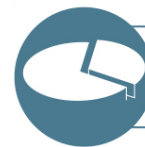
METASTATIC BREAST CANCER: *The other half of the story*

An often forgotten group of women lives each day with a devastating and incurable disease. Metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients must endure not only their continuous treatment regimen, but they also carry a profound physical, psychological, and emotional burden. It is of utmost importance to address the unmet needs of these women while delaying the progression of their disease and improving their quality of life.

WHAT IS METASTATIC BREAST CANCER?

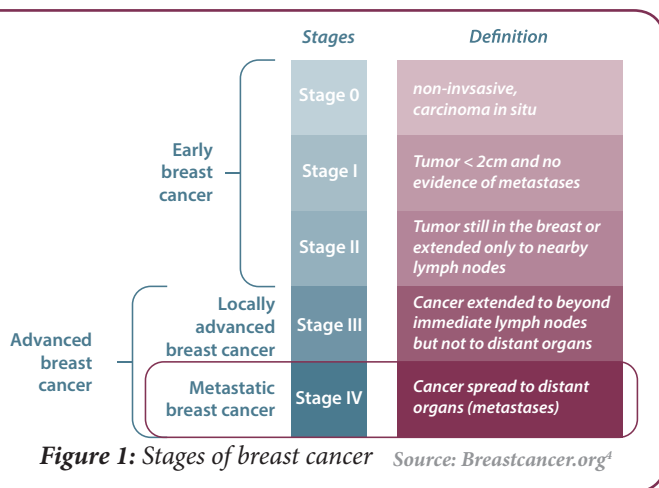
Metastatic breast cancer (mBC) is the most advanced stage of breast cancer, diagnosed as stage IV, mBC occurs when the cancer spreads beyond the breast to other parts of the body. Even if a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer at an early stage, it may still develop into metastatic disease.

Unfortunately, it is currently an incurable condition.

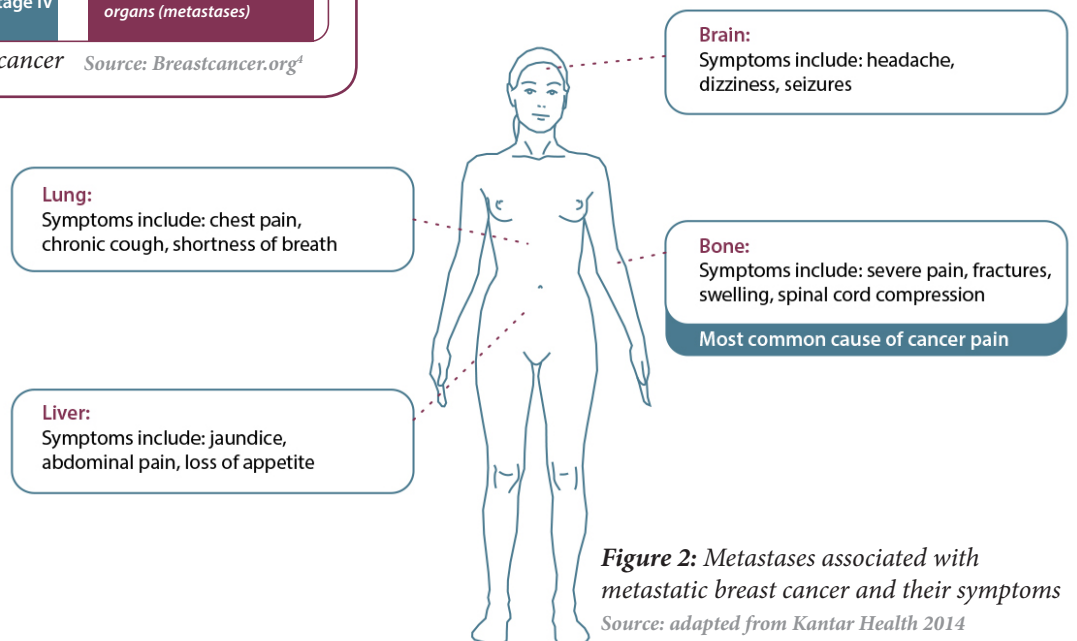


Up to 30% of those diagnosed with early breast cancer will eventually develop mBC^{1,2}

mBC can develop 5, 10 or even 15 years after its initial diagnosis³



Women diagnosed with mBC today face a median survival (the time when half the patients are expected to be alive) of two to four years⁵ They, together with their families, experience profound physical, psychological, and emotional tolls as a result of the impact of the disease.⁶



LIVING WITH MBC

mBC has a substantial impact on the quality of life of patients. Along with the huge psychological burden, they must also live with the physical symptoms of the disease.

As breast cancer spreads, or metastasized, it most commonly moves to are the bones, liver, brain and lungs. Each type of metastasis is associated with its own set of symptoms, impacting the patient's daily life.

BONE METASTASIS – *the most common site of cancer-related pain*^{7,8}

Bone metastasis:

- Most common site of cancer-related pain¹
- Experienced by two-thirds of women with advanced breast cancer
- Often associated with complications called skeletal-related events¹, which can be very painful and even cause paralysis

Delaying the progression of the disease is therefore of utmost importance for women with mBC and their families. Removing the painful symptoms and the emotional burden and uncertainty that accompany disease progression, can allow them to continue living full and active lives.⁹

WHY IS IT SO DIFFERENT FROM BREAST CANCER?

There are distinct challenges facing patients living with mBC compared to those with early breast cancer, including their need to undergo continuous treatment.

For mBC patients, there is no possibility of a cure. They live with the feeling of limited time and the emotional toll can be profound, affecting how they feel about themselves, communicate with others, and live their lives.

“We want to be viewed not just as patients, but as people who want to make the most of their lives.”

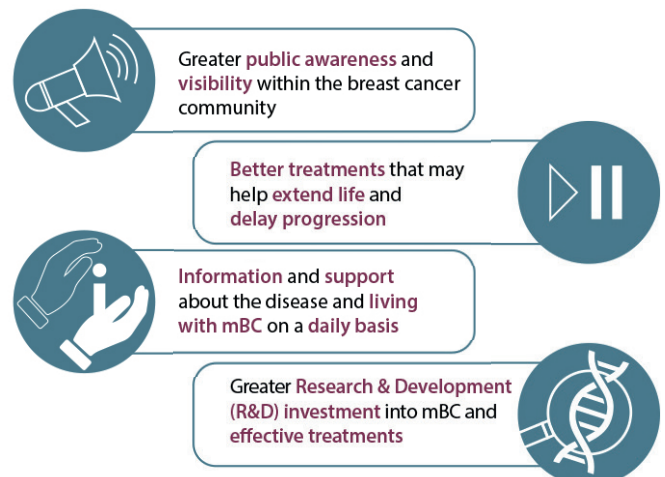
Michal, a woman with mBC

THE UNMET NEEDS OF WOMEN WITH MBC

Women with mBC have considerable clinical, informational, and emotional needs^{10,11,12,14,15,16} that must be addressed to help them gain control over their condition and lead as full a life as possible, for as long as possible.

Only five percent of cancer research funding currently goes towards metastatic disease.¹⁷ Greater investment in research on mBC is urgently needed to improve our knowledge of this disease and to help identify treatments that may improve outcomes for women with mBC.¹⁸

Figure 3: Unmet needs of women with metastatic breast cancer.^{19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27}



THE OTHER HALF OF THE STORY

Given the tremendous positive results of advocacy and awareness, the general public's understanding of breast cancer usually relates to early breast cancer.²⁸ This level of understanding must also be achieved for mBC.

Currently many women with mBC feel that their stories and struggles do not align with the public perception of the disease,²⁹ leaving them feeling forgotten and invisible.^{30,31,32,33}

It is essential to raise awareness of this 'forgotten' group of breast cancer patients living with such a devastating disease and give them their own platform. The voices and needs of mBC women must be included in the larger breast cancer conversation.

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