Key Insights on Early and Metastatic Breast Cancers

An overview of early and advanced breast cancers with special focus on staging, molecular subtypes, risk factors and risk stratification, risk of developing breast cancer, and therapeutic options

Overview of breast cancer (BC)^{1,2}



BC is a disease where the cells of the breast tissue grow uncontrollably and form tumours Leading cause of cancer-related death for women worldwide

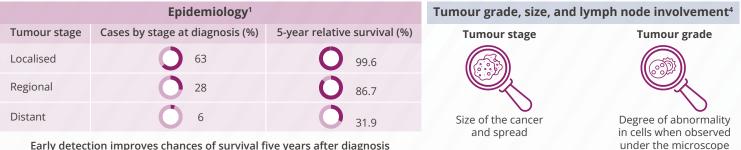


Early BC (EBC)² Cancer contained within the breast tissue or limited to the axillary lymph nodes



Metastatic BC (MBC) Cancer that has spread to distant organs of the body

30% of patients with EBC may develop distant metastases months or years after receiving initial treatment³



Early detection improves chances of survival five years after diagnosis



Tumour (T), lymph node (N), and metastasis (M) staging system or TNM system: Stage 1: tumour is <2 cm across Stage 2: tumour is >2 cm but <5 cm across Stage 3: tumour is >5 cm Stage 4: tumour of any size growing into the chest wall or skin

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N1: cancer in 1-3 axillary lymph nodes N2: cancer has spread to >4 but <10 axillary lymph nodes N3: cancer has spread to >10 axillary lymph nodes, collarbone lymph nodes, with at least one area of cancer spread of >2 mm

M: cancer has spread to distant organs

Stage and grade, among other factors, of BC at the time of diagnosis determine the appropriate treatment regimen and length of survival

Accurate case and staging information collected and maintained by cancer registries are important for the assessment of survival curves and other epidemiological variables⁵

BC is a heterogeneous, phenotypically diverse group comprising biological subtypes that have distinct prognosis, progression, and response to therapy

Histological subtypes ⁶	Intrinsic or molecular subtypes ⁶	
Invasive breast carcinoma of no special type⊘ 70–75%⊘ Special morphological characteristics and various histological patterns	Immunohistochemistry Luminal A ⊘~40% ⊘ Best prognosis ⊘ ER⁺ and/or ⊘ Low Ki-67	
Invasive lobular carcinoma ⊘ 5–15% ⊘ Discohesive ⊘ Estrogen receptor positive (ER ⁺), tumour cells human epidermal receptor 2 negative (HER2 ⁻), aberrant E-cadherin	PR ⁺ , HER2 ⁻ Luminal B ⊘~20% ⊘ ER ⁺ and/or PR ⁺ , HER2 ^{+/-} ⊘ Ki-67 >20% Molecular classification	
Invasive mucinous carcinoma	HER2 enriched ⊘~10–15% ⊘ ER⁻, PR⁻, HER2⁺ Triple-negative ⊗~15–20% ⊘ Worst prognosis ⊘ ER⁻, PR⁻, HER2⁻	

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Risk of developing BC⁷



As per the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines **General population risk**

Lifetime risk of developing BC: 11% BCs develop beyond the age of 50



Moderate-risk Lifetime risk of developing BC: 17-30%

3-8% chance of developing BC between the ages of 40 and 50 **High-risk**

Lifetime risk of developing BC: >30% >8% chance of developing BC

Low penetrance genes

MDM4, 19p13.1, and

are loci exclusive to

triple-negative BC and

BRCA1-associated BC

NF1, and NBN

TERT-CLPTM1L rs10069690

FGFR2, LSP1, MAP3K1, TGF-β1,

TOX3, RECQL, MUTYH, MSH6,

between the ages of 40 and 50



Significantly higher chance of developing BC at a younger age than those in the general population

Accurate risk stratification in BC will enable tailoring of screening programmes to identify and target at-risk populations, reducing BC-specific mortality⁸

Genetic risk factors of BC^{9,10,11}

15% of BC are associated with a genetic predisposition and 50% of these cases are associated with BReast CAncer gene 1/2 (BRCA1/2)

High penetrance genes

- BRCA1
 - BRCA2 Epithelial cadherin or
 - E-Cadherin gene (CDH1)
 - Phosphatase and tensin
 - homolog gene (PTEN)
 - STK11 TP53



Moderate penetrance

- genes Checkpoint kinase 2 (CHEK2) Partner and localiser of BRCA2 (PALB2)
- RADiation-sensitive protein 51 Paralog C (RAD51C)
- ATM
 - RRIP1

BC risk assessment tools and models^{12,13,14}



Gail/BC risk assessment tool (BCRAT) model Estimates the risk of developing BC over 5 years and over a lifetime, based on non-genetic risk factors



(PGVs)

BRCAPro model BRCAPro, a Bayesian computer program or statistical model, calculates an individual's chances of being a carrier of BRCA1/BRCA2 pathogenic germline variants

Considers personal and family history of BC and ovarian cancer to identify the presence of BRCA1/BRCA2 PGVs



Breast cancer surveillance consortium (BCSC) model

BCSC risk calculator estimating a woman's 5- and 10-year risk of developing invasive BC based on:

Age, race/ethnicity, family history of BC, prior biopsy, and breast density



Breast and ovarian analysis of disease incidence and carrier estimation algorithm (BOADICEA)/CanRisk model Estimates the probability of BRCA1/BRCA2 PGVs and BC incidence based on family history and genotypes for PGVs



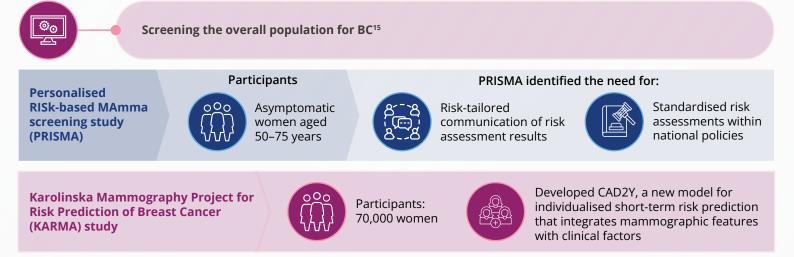
PENN II model, myriad model, lambda model, and couch model are some of the other BC risk assessment models

Tyrer-Cuzick/international breast

cancer intervention study (IBIS) model

Estimates the individual risk of BC over time

and the probability of BRCA1/BRCA2 PGVs



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European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) guidelines on the treatment of EBC^{16,17}

--- Local anticancer treatment

Systemic anticancer treatment



RT

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For low-risk patients, partial breast irradiation is effective with low toxicity

• For high-risk patients (younger age, a higher burden of disease in the breast and axilla, and biological characteristics) post-mastectomy RT is recommended

Chemotherapy	Hormone o	or endocrine therapy (ET)	Targeted therapy	
 Reduces risk of recurrence by 30% NAC for high-risk patients Converts inoperable tumour resectable Eliminates micrometastatic I Decreased mastectomy rates Ki-67 is a predictive marker for resense in the predict	to (tamoxifer • Reduce in the f esions ER/PR positivit for ET ponse to In postmenop	ET for ER ⁺ and/or PR ⁺ n) BC for 5-10 years is the recurrence risk by 50% irst 4 years ty is a predictive biomarker ausal patients, aromatase otherapy or tamoxifen for commended	 Anti-HER2 targeted therapy, trastuzumab +/-pertuzumab (1 year) with non-anthracyclin-based AC or NAC in TDM1 HER2+ patients without a complete response to neoadjuvant prescription HER2 positivity is a predictive biomarker for anti-HER2 therapy Immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICIs) CDK4/6 inhibitors 	
ESMO guidelines on treatment of MBC ^{16,18} Luminal BC (ER ⁺ PR ⁺ HER2 ⁻ MBC)				
Biomarker assessment		First-line treatme	First-line treatment	
⊘ ER, PR, and HER2	, and HER2		 CDK4/6 inhibitors combined with ET Chemotherapy for patients with visceral crises 	
⊘ Germline <i>BRCA1/2</i> mutation (<i>gBRCAm</i>) status		😔 Chemotherapy f		
⊘ Programmed death-ligand 1 (PE		Cocond line treat	Correct line twenty out	
 ⊘ Phosphatidylinositol-4,5-bisphosphate 3-kinase catalytic subunit alpha (PIK3CA) ⊘ Estrogen receptor alpha gene (ESR1) 		 Previously untri- therapies, such 		
Triple negative BCTriple negative BC				
First-line treatment	Second-line treatment	Third-line therapy	First-line systemic treatment	
\bigcirc For ER ⁻ PR ⁻ HER2 ⁺			⊘ For PD-L1-positive	
Trastuzumab and pertuzumab with	metastasis Anti-HER2 therapy	govitecan monotherapy	Chemotherapy with ICIs	
chemotherapy (if not	chemotherapy	⊖ Chemotherapy	Pembrolizumab	
contraindicated)			Atezolizumab	
⊘ For ER ⁺ PR ⁺ HER2 ⁺			 For gBRCAm mTNBC Carboplatin 	
 Add ET to trastuzumab with chemotherapy (if not contraindicated) 			 For PD-L1-negative and gBRCA-wild-type mTNBC 	
ET as maintenance	1 1		Chemotherapy	
			Anthracyclines or taxanes as monotherapy or combination	
			Nab-paclitaxel-carboplatin	
			Sacituzumab govitecan-hziy	
Brain metastasis is more	common in HER2+ patients ar	nd TDXd and tucatinib are avail	able for the treatment of such patients	



Surgery

therapy (RT)

ALN dissection

Breast-conserving surgery (BCS) followed by radiation

For large tumours, neoadjuvant chemotherapy (NAC) is

• Axillary lymph node (ALN) involvement is managed by

used to shrink tumour prior to BCS

In patients with MBC, clinical decision-making for personalised treatment is based on biomarker expression¹⁸

ESMO-MCBS v1.1 score: 3; ESCAT score: I-C

Larotrectinib

Unresectable or metastatic microsatellite instability-high/mismatch repair deficient tumours • Pembrolizumab ESMO-MCBS v1.1 score: 3; ESCAT score: I-C • Entrectinib

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Importance of a multidisciplinary team¹⁸



Oncology and/or BC nurses Proactively screen for and manage treatment-emergent toxicities



Optimal metastatic disease management requires an interdisciplinary approach

Multimodality treatment specialists Administer local image-guided ablative therapy, radiotherapy, and systemic therapies



Subspecialists Monitor skeletal-related changes in patients with bone metastasis



Neurologists, surgeons, oncologists RT, nurses, psychologist, pathologist, radiologist, nutrition, geneticists, orthopaedics and other subspecialists Manage the central nervous system and other situations

Palliative care should be introduced early and offered both in an inpatient and an outpatient setting¹⁸



Optimal symptom control

Proactive symptom management and patient education help to alleviate side effects and improve quality of life



Psychological, social, and spiritual support



 Patient-reported outcomes to capture the patient experience and perceived impact of treatment and toxicity on health status

 Care management for:
 • Dyspnoea
 • Cachexia
 • Fatigue
 • Depression and anxiety



Good communication between and joint decision-making by the patient and healthcare professionals are essential to ensure mutual understanding of treatment expectations and goals¹⁸

Key messages

arphi) Early and accurate diagnosis of BC is key to improving treatment outcomes

Risk stratification or identification of an individual's risk of BC enables the adoption of treatment programmes to target at-risk populations

Accurate clinical staging, biomarker status, and specific molecular alterations are critical for prognosis, therapeutic decision-making, and implementation of personalised treatment choices

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