

METASTATIC (STAGE IV) BREAST CANCER IN CANADA

What is Metastatic Breast Cancer?

Metastatic breast cancer (often called mBC) happens when breast cancer cells spread beyond the breast and start growing in other parts of the body. mBC is also sometimes called advanced, secondary, or stage IV breast cancer.

The most common places where cancer cells spread to are the



Bones



Lungs



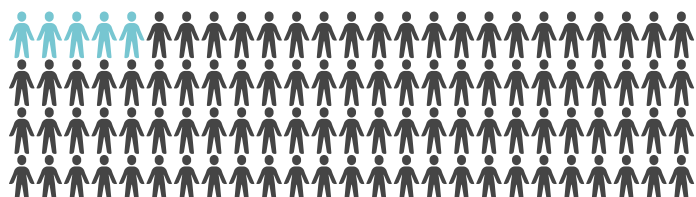
Liver



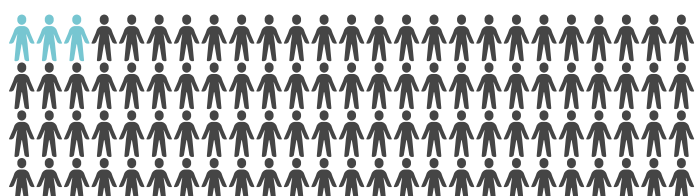
Brain

While mBC cannot be cured, treatment focuses on slowing the spread of the cancer, controlling symptoms, and improving quality of life, rather than eliminating the disease.

How Often Does it Happen?



About **5 out of every 100 women (5%)** diagnosed with breast cancer already have metastatic disease when they are first diagnosed. This is called **de novo metastatic breast cancer**.



About **3 in 10 women (30%)*** who are diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer will later develop mBC.

*Much of what we know about metastatic breast cancer comes from data collected outside of Canada, since Canadian data is limited. These statistics highlight important trends but may not fully reflect the Canadian experience.

Outcomes



The **5-year net survival rate** for women diagnosed with mBC in Canada is 23%. This means roughly **2 to 3 in every 10 people** with mBC are alive five years after their diagnosis.

How Race and Age Impact Outcomes



Non-white Canadian women are experiencing higher death rates:

- **Up to 40%** higher for Black women in their 40s
- **Up to 50%** higher for First Nations and Métis women in their 60s



The number of **women under 40** diagnosed with de novo mBC is rising by **3.5% per year***.

Sources

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A note on language: These statistics are reported by sex (male/female) and may not fully reflect the experiences of all genders.