

# BREAST CANCER



CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK

## WORKING TOWARDS A CURE

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer. But thanks to your support and our groundbreaking research, more women are surviving the disease than ever before. Last year, we spent £45 million on our life-saving work, helping to paint a brighter future for breast cancer patients and their families.

## WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer develops when a cell in the breast begins to multiply out of control to form a tumour. Some cancer cells may then break away and spread to other parts of the body. Each year, 48,000 women in the UK are diagnosed with breast cancer – that's 5 an hour. Men can also develop breast cancer, but it is very rare.

### HOW IS BREAST CANCER TREATED?

Most people will have surgery and this may be followed by radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy. Many women will also have hormone therapy using drugs such as tamoxifen or anastrozole.

### WHAT ABOUT BREAST SCREENING?

Breast screening is offered to women in the UK between 50-70 and aims to detect cancers early when they are easier to treat. Women over 70 can request a screening appointment.

Our work contributed to the development and improvement of the programme, which each year saves around 1,300 lives. Screening has both benefits and risks, and whether or not to go for screening is a personal choice. Women need access to clear information to make that decision.

### HAVE YOU GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT CANCER?

Visit [www.cruk.org/cancer-help](http://www.cruk.org/cancer-help) or call our specialist cancer nurses on 0808 800 4040.

MORE  
THAN TWO  
THIRDS OF  
WOMEN NOW  
SURVIVE FOR  
20 YEARS OR  
MORE

## WHAT COULD AFFECT YOUR RISK?



Most cases of breast cancer are in women over 50.



Inheriting certain faulty genes can increase the risk of breast cancer.



Taking the Pill or having HRT both slightly increase the risk of breast cancer.



Being active reduces the risk. And being overweight after the menopause increases it.



The more alcohol a woman drinks, the greater her risk of breast cancer.



Having children at a younger age and breast-feeding both lower the risk of breast cancer.



## OUR SCIENCE CHANGES LIVES

Our scientists carried out the early work that led to the development of Herceptin. This drug has made a real difference for a quarter of women whose breast cancer is likely to respond to this treatment.

Thousands of women, and hundreds of men, are breast cancer survivors thanks to advances in research. We have been at the heart of this progress.

## DEBORAH PARKER FROM GREENWICH KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

'I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2004. After surgery, the doctors tested a sample of my tumour and said that my cancer would respond to the drug Herceptin. I responded really well and, after a long battle, I'm now in good health again.'

For information on our breast cancer research, stats, signs & symptoms and treatment, go to [www.cruk.org](http://www.cruk.org)

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

When it comes to beating breast cancer, we've got a proven track record. Our work has underpinned today's treatments for the disease and has helped save many thousands of lives.



## PROFESSOR CARLOS CALDAS IN CAMBRIDGE TELLS US HIS STORY

'I wanted to be a breast cancer researcher because I believe research is the key to beating the disease. I recently led an international team that helped identify the genetic fingerprints of breast cancer – reclassifying the disease into ten new subtypes. This work will transform the way breast cancer is diagnosed and treated in the future – making it truly tailored to each person's unique tumour.'

### LIFESTYLE CHOICES

Thanks to our work, we now understand many of the lifestyle factors that can affect the risk of breast cancer, helping women to make informed choices.

### SAVING LIVES

Our research proved that radiotherapy could help prevent breast cancer from coming back, helping more women survive.

### NEW TREATMENTS

Because of our important clinical trials of breast cancer drugs, including tamoxifen, many thousands more women now survive.

### RAISING AWARENESS

We were pioneers in encouraging women to be breast aware and help spot breast cancer earlier.

## OUR PROGRESS IS YOUR PROGRESS

We're proud of what we've achieved, but there's still a long way to go. Here's a glimpse at what our scientists are doing to prevent, control and cure breast cancer.

**Leicester:** Dr Jacqui Shaw is developing sophisticated new ways of detecting breast cancer cells hiding in the bloodstream. Her work opens doors to improved diagnosis and treatment.



**Sheffield:** Professor Colby Eaton's goal is to stop breast cancer cells from spreading to the bones. His research is laying the foundations for new approaches to control and treat advanced disease.

**Cambridge:** Dr Jason Carroll's pioneering work is providing insights into how some breast cancers stop responding to treatment, and how this could be overcome.



Find out more: download other research leaflets in this series at <http://bit.ly/research-leaflets>

**London:** Professor Jack Cuzick is leading an international clinical trial to find out if the drug anastrozole could prevent breast cancer in women with an increased risk of the disease.



Professor Peter Mortimer is studying arm swelling (lymphoedema), a common side effect of breast cancer treatment, to find new ways of preventing or treating the problem.

And Dr Nazneen Rahman is unravelling the genetic code of 1,000 women with a family history of breast cancer to find new genes linked to the disease. She is following in the footsteps of other CRUK researchers, who've led the world in discovering many of the genes involved in breast cancer, including BRCA2. Women with a faulty copy of this gene have a much higher risk of the disease.

