

About the Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF)



BCRF is the largest private funder of breast cancer research in the world.



Breast cancer is a complex disease with no simple solution. Every diagnosis is unique and puts lives at risk. We must stop breast cancer in its tracks, and research is the answer.

Founded in 1993 by Evelyn H. Lauder, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation is the largest private funder of breast cancer research in the world. We invest in a wide range of research—from prevention to metastasis—because each area of investigation informs another, propelling us toward the solutions we urgently need.

We convene and connect the best minds in science—giving them the opportunity to pursue their most innovative ideas.

Our combination of investment and cross-disciplinary collaboration accelerates the entire field and builds momentum for new discoveries. BCRF-funded investigators have been behind every major breakthrough in breast cancer research, and the field is moving faster than ever. We can't stop now.

With you, and the entire BCRF community, we are fueling the world's most promising research. Join us—together, we will bring the end of breast cancer into focus.

OUR REACH

280+ researchers

AT LEADING MEDICAL AND
ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

18 countries

WITH BCRF INVESTIGATORS
AT WORK

\$75M+

IN SCIENTIFIC GRANTS
FUNDED IN 2026-2027

OUR IMPACT

WE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF CANCER THAN EVER BEFORE.

BCRF-supported research led to the discovery of breast cancer stem cells, the very “roots” of the disease, which are helping us understand cancer’s fundamental properties. From this knowledge, our researchers can explore ways to target breast cancer stem cells to prevent breast cancer progression and metastasis.

FEWER PATIENTS WITH LOW-RISK BREAST CANCER ARE OVERTREATED.

BCRF-funded research in the United States and Europe has contributed to the development of diagnostic tools that help doctors evaluate whether a woman with early-stage ER+breast cancer can forgo chemotherapy and receive the same benefit from less toxic hormonal therapies. Preventing over-treatment has allowed patients to avoid unnecessary side effects and improved quality of life for many women.

WE’VE GROWN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW LIFESTYLE INFLUENCES BREAST CANCER RISK.

Our researchers have demonstrated that certain lifestyle choices can influence incidence and recurrence. Thanks to their work, we have begun to understand how diet and exercise are linked to breast cancer risk and survival, how inflammation from obesity may trigger breast cancer development and how a low-fat diet and weight loss can reduce the risk of recurrence.

WE ARE LEARNING MORE ABOUT WHY CANCERS SPREAD OR RETURN.

BCRF investigators are working diligently to uncover why certain breast cancer spreads or recurs. We support research that aims to identify markers in blood or DNA to improve our ability to measure the risk of metastasis and develop strategies to prevent it and fund clinical trials that are testing promising new combination therapies for treatment of advanced breast cancer.

WE CAN BETTER PREDICT A PATIENT’S RESPONSE TO TREATMENT AND RISK OF RECURRENCE.

Our researchers were critical players in the breakthrough of biomarkers, unique molecular signals that can help predict how tumors will respond to certain treatments and the possibility of cancer returning. This discovery helps ensure patients receive the right drugs and that preventive measures can be initiated early in patients with a high risk of recurrence or metastasis.

WE NOW HAVE BETTER SCREENING AND RISK PREDICTION STRATEGIES.

Early detection through mammography provides the best chance of successfully treating breast cancer. BCRF-funded researchers have enhanced mammographic technology and, most recently, developed the first FDA-authorized AI tool that uses a routine mammogram to predict a woman's risk of developing breast cancer over the next five years—ushering in a new era of more personalized, proactive care.

WE ARE UNCOVERING THE ROLE GENETICS PLAYS IN BREAST CANCER.

BCRF has supported key players in advancing our understanding of the inheritable risk of breast cancer, from discoveries about BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations to the creation of the world’s most comprehensive database of breast cancer genes. This new wealth of knowledge allows scientists to identify other gene mutations that may influence a person's risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer.

WE HAVE DISCOVERED THAT BREAST CANCER IS NOT ONE BUT MANY DISEASES.

It was BCRF researchers who found that breast cancer is, in fact, several different diseases, each of which develops, progresses and responds to therapies differently. Our scientists are now learning that the major subtypes—Luminal A, Luminal B, HER2-positive and triple-negative—can be further classified into sub-categories with distinct patterns of progression and response to therapies, opening the door to more individualized treatment plans.

ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL TREATMENT IS A THING OF THE PAST.

BCRF scientists have contributed significantly to advancing precision medicine in breast cancer. Therapies are now more personalized, resulting in better, more effective treatments and improved outcomes for patients. BCRF supported the early clinical trials that helped accelerate the development of the first HER2-targeted therapy for breast cancer, Herceptin® (trastuzumab). Since then, BCRF investigators have led the way in developing several first-in-class therapies for breast cancer, bolstering the growing well of treatments against breast cancer.

WE KNOW MORE ABOUT LIFE AFTER BREAST CANCER AND THE ISSUES FACING SURVIVORS.

BCRF funds leaders in the field who are focused on survivorship and quality of life and conducting studies to improve cognitive impairment from chemotherapy and reduce cancer-associated stress and fatigue. We also fund research that has shown that a healthy lifestyle may reduce side effects from treatment and the risk of recurrence, and identified biomarkers that can indicate the presence of other health conditions resulting from chemotherapy, providing opportunities for early interventions.

WE ARE STARTING TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO HARNESS THE BODY’S OWN IMMUNE SYSTEM.

Our researchers helped uncover how the cells surrounding a breast tumor can either help the body's immune system fight the cancer or, in some cases, help the cancer grow. This breakthrough paved the way for new tools that can predict which treatments are most likely to work, as well as new therapies and vaccines designed to strengthen the immune system, improve treatment outcomes, and help prevent cancer from spreading. These discoveries have also led to immunotherapies for breast cancer that have shown promising results, particularly for hard-to-treat triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC), including in some patients who were unable to continue chemotherapy.

Visit [BCRF.org](https://www.bcrf.org) to learn how to get involved.