Together: Finding the Cures

Metastatic Breast Cancer Collaborative Research Initiative

Susan G. Komen + Duke University + University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

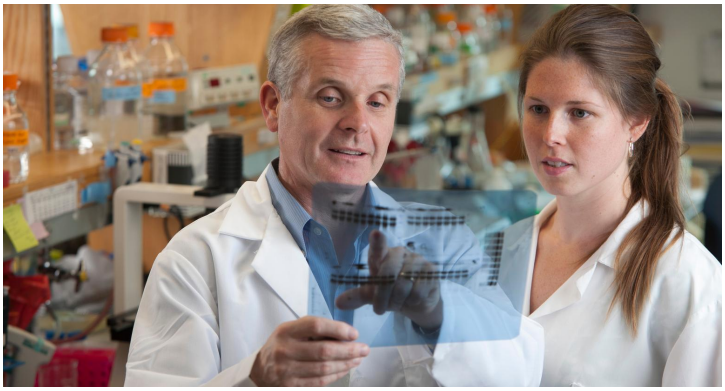
The National Challenge

Metastatic Breast Cancer is the breast cancer that kills. In fact, it kills over 42,000 women and men in the U.S. every year.

The 5-year survival rate for women and men whose breast cancer is contained to the breast is 99%. Once breast cancer metastasizes to areas outside of the breast and surrounding regional lymph nodes, often to the bones, liver, lungs or brain, the 5-year survival rate drops to 27%. It's time to do better!

Susan G. Komen's Bold Goal is to reduce breast cancer deaths by 50% in the U.S. by 2026. The key to achieving this goal is to increase the survival rates of people living with Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC) by finding new treatments and cures through research.

In fact, it is pretty simple. Research cures cancer. Nothing else does.



What is MBC?

MBC is an advanced stage (stage IV) of breast cancer where tumor cells have spread to other parts of the body, such as the bones, liver, lungs or brain. Nearly all breast cancer deaths are due to MBC.

The Local Response

In the Triangle we have a unique opportunity to motivate two world-class cancer research institutions to combine their research and compound their results. The Duke Cancer Institute and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center are partnering with Komen in a first-of-its-kind collaborative effort focused on metastatic breast cancer research. This effort will be made possible through the **Susan G. Komen Metastatic Breast Cancer Collaborative Research Initiative.**

With an initial target to reach a $1 Million Dollar Milestone, the Komen MBC Collaborative Research Initiative will target and fund collaborative efforts between the the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Duke Cancer Institute, both making progress independently toward understanding metastatic breast cancer. A gift to this fund will support unparalleled, lifesaving Triangle-based MBC research.

Research will cure this disease. Until then, research will transform MBC from a terminal diagnosis to a chronic disease, giving patients and their families the priceless gift of time.

But time is of the essence. The pandemic we are currently facing has negatively impacted breast cancer research. Lifesaving breast cancer research funding has been diminished and hardworking labs at both Duke and UNC have been impacted. The Komen Metastatic Breast Cancer Collaborative Research Initiative will bring much-needed dollars to these institutions and keep vital research moving forward.

Did you know?

In the U.S., it's estimated that at least 154,000 people have MBC. This year, more than 42,000 women and men will die from breast cancer.

"We've developed a much deeper understanding of the genomics and cellular changes that lead to metastatic breast cancer. We've made some important strides in extending life for our patients but now is the time to do more. The Komen MBC Research Initiative, linking the amazing clinical and research talent at UNC and Duke, is a bold move that will ignite collaboration and yield more effective therapy for Triangle residents and the nation."

Dr. Shelley Earp, UNC Lineberger Cancer Center

UNC LINEBERGER COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

The Duke/UNC Commitment

Both the Duke Cancer Institute and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center are eager to partner with Komen to build on the strong work they are currently doing. **There is no doubt that the need for translational research into the understanding, detection, and treatment of metastatic breast cancer is urgent.**

This new fund will launch innovation and fast-track MBC research. By removing research silos and leveraging local expertise at both institutions, we will accelerate the discovery of ways for MBC patients to live well and live longer with this disease.

Duke Cancer Institute

"Despite many advances in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in recent years, metastatic breast cancer remains a disease that kills too many women. New treatment approaches are still desperately needed and success will require collaborations across disciplines and institutions. The Komen MBC Research Initiative recognized this need and is responding by providing support for collaborations between investigators at Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill. Working together, all things become possible."

Dr. Michael Kastan, Duke Cancer Institute

MBC Collaborative Research Initiative

"I call myself a thriver because I AM thriving.
I live my life and THRIVE, but my family and I know
that it is RESEARCH that will save my life."

Stephanie Walker, MBC Thriver and Advocate - Tarboro, NC

How will it work?

The Komen MBC Collaborative Research Initiative is a unique, local, designated research fund that will leverage and build upon current, Triangle-based research. Leading Komen Scholars and young researchers at Duke and UNC have expressed great enthusiasm about the potential to produce real impact through **true intellectual collaboration.** Now, funding must be secured to make this revolutionary lifesaving research possible.

With $1 million secured in commitments, Komen will open the granting process and accept applications. Only collaborative projects between the Duke Cancer Institute and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center will be eligible.

Housed within the highly regarded Komen Research Program, applications will be evaluated through the highly esteemed peer-review process of the Komen Scientific Advisory Board. With this rigorous review and through a true global lens, the fund will drive the most critical research needs for MBC.

Breakthrough Research

The MBC Collaborative Research Initiative is dedicated to funding research breakthroughs specifically for metastatic breast cancer in the labs of two of the most renowned research institutions in the world – The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University. Over the past 10 years, Susan G. Komen has invested more than $27 million in Triangle-based research.

The Possibilities are Endless and URGENT

Thousands of family's lives will be changed forever by an MBC diagnosis this year. Sadly, 42,000 lives are at risk this year. Families are waiting for us to find the cures. We need outstanding translational research into the understanding, detection, and treatment of metastatic breast cancer now.

Critical areas of focus include:

- How can the evolution of drug resistance be monitored and defeated?
- Does the immune system impact breast cancer development and treatment?
- How does the tumor microenvironment influence metastases?
- Will liquid biopsies or other technologies lead to early detection of late recurrence?

This is the work needed today. This is the work that will enable us to find the cures. The five-year survival rate for metastatic breast cancer is only 27%.THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. With your help, Komen + Duke + UNC will help change those numbers and give the ultimate gift of time to the far too many families who are counting on us.

Did You Know?

Although metastatic breast cancer has spread to another part of the body, it's still breast cancer and it is treated as breast cancer.

"Today, the five-year survival rate for metastatic breast cancer is only twenty-seven percent. There is critical need for increasing our understanding of metastatic breast cancer and developing new ways to treat those living with the disease to help them live longer, better lives.

We have a unique opportunity to support innovative research in the Triangle area through a unique collaboration between Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This approach can lead to the very breakthroughs needed to change outcomes and save lives.

We are inspired by the leadership of the Komen NC Triangle to the Coast Affiliate to develop and lead this game-changing initiative, and we look forward to working alongside this local collaboration to find new treatments and cures for metastatic breast cancer."

- Victoria Wolodzko
  Senior VP, Mission at Susan G. Komen

Enough is enough. We must do everything we can to save lives. And, TOGETHER we will.

42,000 deaths each year from MBC is unacceptable.

Research is hope for those fighting metastatic breast cancer today, and for those who will be diagnosed tomorrow.

Ending it starts with you and your bold investment in the Komen Metastatic Breast Cancer Collaborative Research Initiative.

Make a BOLD investment.

JOIN US.

Donate at komennctc.org/mbc

Susan G. Komen NC Triangle to the Coast
600 Airport Blvd., Ste. 100 | Morrisville, NC 27560
www.komennctc.org | (919) 493-2873

Pam Kohl, Director, MBC Collaborative Research Initiative
pkohl@komennctc.org