

Young and Strong

A PROGRAM FOR YOUNG WOMEN
WITH BREAST CANCER

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SUSAN F. SMITH
CENTER FOR
WOMEN'S CANCERS

DANA-FARBER/BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S
CANCER CENTER

A program just for you

Established in 2005, Young and Strong, the Program for Young Women with Breast Cancer at Dana-Farber's Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers, provides comprehensive care and support to young women confronting the challenges of living with and beyond breast cancer. Our mission is to enhance care and education for patients and their families, as well as to advance understanding of the biology of breast cancer and the experience of the disease through ongoing research focused on younger women. More than 5,300 young women have been enrolled to date.

For more information about Young and Strong, please contact the Young and Strong team at **617-632-3916**, or visit www.danafarber.org/YoungWomenBreastCancer.

You can also follow us on Twitter @YoungStrongDFCI.

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What's New for HER2?

Developments over the last two decades have revolutionized the way we treat HER2-positive (HER2+) breast cancer, transforming the HER2 protein from an ominous marker to a predictor of high response rates and excellent long-term outcomes. Combinations of chemotherapy with anti-HER2 antibodies – trastuzumab (Herceptin®) and pertuzumab (Perjeta®) – have led the way and remain a cornerstone of treatment. While progress has been great, much work is still needed in this field. At the annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Conference in December 2019, several studies were presented introducing the next wave of treatments for HER2+ breast cancer. Notably, Dana-Farber researchers had a significant role in these efforts and many of our patients have contributed to the development of these new agents.



Sara Tolaney, MD, MPH (left), Margaret Haldoupis, RN, and Ian Krop, MD, PhD, plan clinical trials for breast cancer.

HER2+ Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC)

Trastuzumab deruxtecan (T-DXd) or ENHERTU®

T-DXd is a new antibody-drug conjugate. Conjugates are comprised of targeting antibodies that are attached to active chemotherapy by special chemical linkers. This combination allows for more direct delivery of chemotherapy to cancer cells while sparing healthy tissues. Trastuzumab emtansine (TDM1) was the first drug of this kind and has been used in treating HER2+ MBC for several years. T-DXd has a different chemotherapy attached: deruxtecan. Since deruxtecan is not commonly used in treating breast cancer, cancer cells are less likely to have developed resistance. Furthermore, deruxtecan is able to cross cell membranes (membrane permeable), so once it is delivered to HER2+ tumor cells, it can easily cross the cell membrane to affect adjacent HER2-normal cells. This is called a “bystander effect.”

At San Antonio, Ian Krop, MD, PhD, associate chief of Breast Oncology at Dana-Farber, presented results from DESTINY-Breast01, a clinical trial in which women with HER2+ MBC who previously received trastuzumab and TDM1 were all treated with T-DXd. Results were unlike anything seen before, particularly in women who had already received some of the best drugs. Response rates were very high (over 60%) and prolonged, with many women continuing to benefit from treatment for well over a year. Based on these results, which were also published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted accelerated approval for T-DXd in December 2019 for patients with HER2+ MBC after ≥ 2 previous lines of HER2-targeted therapy for MBC.

Tucatinib

Tucatinib is a new, oral, HER2-targeted small molecule. It is more specific to HER2 than the existing small molecules, lapatinib and neratinib. Tucatinib's increased specificity results in fewer side effects when compared to the other small molecules. This group of drugs has a unique feature compared to commonly used antibody-based therapies. Due to their small

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Eric Winer, MD, was the senior investigator for the HER2CLIMB study.

size, they can penetrate more easily into the brain. This is important because patients with HER2+ MBC are at risk for the cancer spreading to the brain and strategies to prevent this spread are needed.

In the HER2CLIMB trial, tucatinib was administered with trastuzumab and capecitabine. Results were compared to the administration of trastuzumab and capecitabine alone (without tucatinib). Women who received the tucatinib combination had significantly better responses to treatment and their cancers were under control for a greater amount of time. Most importantly, they lived longer. Unlike many other studies, nearly 50% of patients in HER2CLIMB had a history of brain metastases; these patients did very well on tucatinib. Eric Winer, MD, chief of Breast Oncology at Dana-Farber, was the senior investigator for this study. Based on these results, which were also published in NEJM, the FDA has approved tucatinib for use in combination with trastuzumab and capecitabine for patients with unresectable locally advanced or metastatic HER2-positive breast cancer, including patients with brain metastases, after ≥ 1 prior anti-HER2-based regimen for MBC.

HER2+ Early Breast Cancer (EBC)

Dana-Farber has also led the charge in treatment “de-escalation” – a strategy aimed at treating the cancer effectively while limiting unnecessary treatment. Several years ago, Sara Tolaney, MD, MPH, associate director of the Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers at Dana-Farber, led the APT trial which established a combination of trastuzumab and one chemotherapy drug (paclitaxel) as a new standard option (the TH regimen), replacing more chemotherapy intensive treatments. At San Antonio this year, Dr. Tolaney presented the ATEMPT trial comparing the TH regimen to the antibody-drug conjugate T-DM1 alone in stage 1 HER2+ EBC. Regimens were equally effective in preventing breast cancer recurrences in the short term, but side effects differed between the two treatments. Patients treated with T-DM1 had better quality of life, less neuropathy and hair loss, and better work productivity. The use of TDM1 in this setting is promising and development is ongoing.

In summary, the San Antonio Breast Cancer Conference in December 2019 highlighted several exciting developments in the treatment of HER2+ breast cancer. These innovative drugs and approaches will influence the treatment of HER2+ breast cancer in coming years and hopefully will cure more women and result in fewer long-term side effects.

Building Confidence in Your Financial Future: Using Financial Planners

Let's talk about one of life's biggest stressors: money. During and after a cancer diagnosis, your finances may become a source of anxiety and put pressure on your family relationships. During treatment, your or your family's income may decrease, and your expenses will likely increase. Using the tips below may help you to alleviate the organizational burden of financial planning. This all may seem overwhelming, but the good news is that help is available, and you don't have to do it alone.

So, what can you do?

First, set aside some time for you and someone you trust to take a big-picture inventory. Put on some comfy clothes, grab a cup of coffee, and take a deep dive into your financial situation by completing the following steps:

- 1. Determine all sources of income.** This could be from working, short- or long-term disability payments, unemployment, income from other sources (such as rental income), or help from a family member. It is also possible to borrow from a life insurance policy or take a withdrawal or loan from a retirement plan. However, before touching an insurance policy or retirement plan, it may be helpful to speak with a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ practitioner that understands your situation.
- 2. Determine what your expenses are.** This is a two-step process. First, add up all your fixed or known expenses. This could be things like rent or a mortgage payment, insurance, utilities, and food. Second, add up your variable or ancillary expenses due to a treatment. This step is a bit harder as these costs usually aren't immediately on your radar. This can include medical bills and the additional costs of parking, meals while at the hospital, travel, and extra childcare costs.
- 3. Subtract your total expenses from your total income.** By doing this you are calculating your net worth and organizing areas where you may need additional support.

So, what now? Now that you have a clearer sense of the full picture, it is time to build out your network of support. You can use a Financial Planner regardless of whether you have recently been diagnosed with breast cancer or were diagnosed years ago. For those who are currently in the midst of active treatment, be sure to also utilize resource specialists, social workers, and access management (see side panel for more information).

Financial Planners

Dana-Farber works in collaboration with the Financial Planning Association of Massachusetts. This partnership gives you and your family the opportunity to work with a trained CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ practitioner at no cost. Your Financial Planner can help guide you through the financial complexities a cancer diagnosis can bring. And don't worry, distance from Dana-Farber doesn't affect your ability to use these services; meetings can occur by phone or email.

Below are some areas that Financial Planners focus on:

Budgeting. Financial Planners help you get a better handle on the money coming in and the money going out. They can also help uncover ways to close that gap. By looking at your overall financial picture, they will suggest changes that could be made to potentially reduce expenses.

Credit counseling and debt. Financial Planners can help you reduce payments on credit cards and advise you on debt in general. They have a vast network of resources at their fingertips, including contacts at other non-profit organizations. They can connect you with a pro bono attorney that may be able to help, if needed, as well as other people who offer help with consumer debt.

Future Planning. How do you start planning for the future? Questions regarding life insurance, medical insurance, and retirement can all be answered by a Financial Planner. They can also help you to take advantage of company benefits when you return to work. For example, basic life insurance may be covered by some employers. Also, whenever possible, it is important to take advantage of a company match by contributing to a 401k.

Other resources. Financial Planners can also provide resources for things like student loan deferment or cancellation in the event of an illness, legal matters, or even tax help.

You are not alone in having many questions regarding the management of your finances after a cancer diagnosis. The good news is that with a little work and planning you can make big changes in your financial future. If you are interested in learning more about connecting with a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, please contact our Resource Office at **617-632-3301**.

*This article was co-written by Rick Fingerman, CFP®, CDFA®, CFS®, CCPS™. Rick serves as the liaison to Dana-Farber's pro bono financial coaching program. He is a managing partner and co-founder of Financial Planning Solutions, LLC, an independent financial planning firm located in Newton, MA. Rick specializes in financial issues specific to women and often leads workshops centered around managing finances during cancer treatment where you can learn steps to help reduce financial stress. He will be presenting in the Blum Patient and Family Resources Center on **June 10, September 16, and December 9** at 12 p.m.*

Team Spotlight



Meet Our New Program Manager, Kathryn Rigby, MSEd, MSW

Kathryn Rigby originally joined the Young and Strong Team in May 2018, as lead program coordinator and has since been promoted to program manager. She has a Master of Science in both Education and Social Work and has extensive experience in her prior work teaching life skills to young adults. When earning her MSW, Kathryn's studies centered on social innovation and change leadership

with a focus on program management. Her first role at Dana-Farber was within the Community Benefits Office as an external affairs intern. In this work, Kathryn provided strategic and tactical planning as well as operations management for community health initiatives. Kathryn is passionate about meeting the unique needs of young women with breast cancer and committed to continue to expand the reach and impact of the program. Originally from Long Island, NY (and still a hardcore Giants fan), Kathryn enjoys spending time with her family and friends, working out at InnerCity Weightlifting, and leading tours at Harpoon Brewery—the venue of Young & Strong's annual Galentine's Day event.

Resources for Dana-Farber Patients

Below are recommendations of people and departments that you can turn to for assistance and guidance during breast cancer treatment. While some of the information below is specific to Dana-Farber, many health care organizations have their own versions of these same supports—be sure to ask your clinical care team about the names of such departments at your local care center.

Resource Specialists

As a Dana-Farber patient, you have the opportunity to work with a resource specialist to coordinate solutions to challenges such as short-term housing accommodations, parking, and transportation to and from medical appointments that fit your budget. In addition to these services, resource specialists can also help you fill out applications for financial assistance programs that help with non-medical bills such as childcare, housekeeping, and groceries. Grant programs are usually short-term solutions, but they can lessen your financial stress during cancer treatment. Many of these grants ask for letters directly from your care center; Dana-Farber resource specialists can help you acquire all the necessary paperwork for

these applications. If you are interested in connecting with a resource specialist, please contact youngandstrong@partners.org.

Social Work

Most hospitals have a social work department. Here at Dana-Farber, patients can meet one-on-one with one of our Breast Oncology social workers to discuss any new concerns and anxieties following a cancer diagnosis, including those related to finances. Your social worker will help you to cope with financial uncertainty, strategize ways to handle stress, and navigate tough financial conversations. If you are interested in connecting with a social worker, please contact youngandstrong@partners.org.

Access Management

The Access Management department can provide you with financial counseling and clearance. Financial counselors assist patients with insurance coverage questions, deposits, payment plans, free care, Medicaid applications, and foundation applications. If you would like to take advantage of this resource, please call **617-632-3242**.



Meet our New Program Coordinator, Sarah Desmarais

Sarah Desmarais is the newest member of the Young and Strong team! She began working as program coordinator in August 2019 after spending two years as a clinical research coordinator in the Early Drug Development Center at Dana-Farber. Sarah is excited to be part of this team and plans on furthering her education part-time this fall in the field of public health. In her spare time, Sarah loves to read cheesy rom-com

novels, binge Netflix crime documentaries, and bartend.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION



Susan G. Komen
www.komen.org

Susan G. Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists working together to save lives.



Young Survival Coalition
www.youngsurvival.org

The Young Survival Coalition (YSC) is an international, nonprofit network of breast cancer survivors and supporters dedicated to the issues unique to young women with breast cancer.



Living Beyond Breast Cancer
www.lbbc.org

Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC) is a national organization whose goal is to improve quality of life and help women in their recovery or management of the disease.



LIVESTRONG Fertility
<http://bit.ly/2qxcgceS>

LIVESTRONG Fertility, a program of the LIVESTRONG Foundation, provides information and support to cancer patients and survivors whose medical treatments present the risk of infertility.



Bright Pink
www.brightpink.org

Bright Pink is the only national non-profit organization focusing on the prevention and early detection of breast and ovarian cancer in young women, while providing support for high-risk individuals.



FORCE
www.facingourrisk.org

Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) is the only national nonprofit organization devoted to hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Programs serve anyone with a BRCA mutation or a family history of cancer.

Support and Education

SoulMates

A peer mentoring program providing guidance and support to women with early-stage (0-III) breast cancer. If you are newly diagnosed and want to be matched to a survivor, or if you are a survivor looking to be a mentor, contact SoulMates at **617-632-6501**.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Support Group

Liz Farrell, MSW, LISCW | Monthly, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

For women of all ages living with metastatic breast cancer. For more information or to register, please email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Facing Forward

Ashley Boyd Fermin, MSW, LCSW

A six-session series held twice yearly for patients who have recently completed early-stage (0-III) breast cancer treatment. For more information, email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Young Women's Telephone Support Group

Megan Donovan, MSW, LCSW

These weekly group calls, facilitated by a breast oncology social worker, give young patients and survivors an opportunity to discuss topics relevant to young women with breast cancer. This group is best suited to women who were diagnosed with stage 0-III breast cancer before age 45 and are within 12 months of the diagnosis. If you're interested in registering for the next cohort, please e-mail youngandstrong@partners.org or call **617-632-3916** for more information.

Save the Date

Sex, Dating, and Cancer in the Era of COVID-19

May 19, 2020, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Sharon Bober, PhD

In collaboration with the Young Adult Program, join us for a virtual workshop for young adult cancer survivors who are single and interested in dating. To register or learn more, email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Sexual Health Workshop

May 27, 2020, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Sharon Bober, PhD

This virtual workshop will address the common sexual health challenges that many patients face during and after breast cancer. This will be a safe space to learn and get more comfortable in your relationship with your body. For more information or to register, email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Forum for Young Women with Breast Cancer

October 2, 2020, 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. | Joseph B. Martin Conference Center, 77 Avenue Louis Pasteur, Boston, MA, 02115

This annual event for patients of all stages and their loved ones includes a patient/survivor panel, a panel of breast cancer experts, group sessions with social workers, and an evening social. For more information or to register, email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Jimmy Fund Walk

October 4, 2020

Join Team Young & Strong for a day of celebrating each other.

Please email youngandstrong@partners.org for registration and event details.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Forum

October 17, 2020, 9 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. | 450 Brookline Ave, Yawkey Center, Boston, MA 02215

For more information or to register, please email embrace@partners.org or call **617-632-2268**.