

Research Involvement

Susan G. Komen for the Cure® is the global leader in funding life-saving breast cancer research. Komen for the Cure has invested nearly \$1.5 billion in research and community health programs, nearly \$465 million of which has gone directly to research. Since funding its first research grant in 1983, the organization's commitment to research has grown at unprecedented rates.

Commitment: In 1983, Komen invested in one research grant worth \$28,000. Ten years later, the total had exploded to 21 grants worth \$590,000, and 10 years after that, Komen distributed \$21 million in research funds. This year, we're providing researchers worldwide with \$60 million.

Achievements: Komen-funded research has touched every major breast cancer advance of the past 27 years, including:

- Discovery of the first breast cancer susceptibility gene (BRCA1) and a test for women to learn about their inherited risk. This has led to very early detection of breast cancer in some women and prevention in others.
- First use of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to discover some cancers that are not visible on mammograms. And while mammograms remain our most effective screening tool, Komen is investing in newer imaging technologies, such as molecular breast imaging (MBI), which may detect cancers that MRIs and mammograms miss.
- Anti-angiogenesis research that demonstrated that breast cancer tumors need a blood supply to survive. This led to development of drugs that stop tumors from making new blood vessels, and in many cases, from progressing.
- Evidence that most breast tumors are driven by hormones, and that drugs such as Tamoxifen are very effective treatments for women whose tumors are estrogen sensitive.
- Discovery of aromatase inhibitors, a newer class of hormone treatments.
- Discovery of the pathways that some cancer cells take in the body, leading to treatments to potentially stop the spread of cancers to other organs.



Focus: Beginning in 2008, Komen's chief scientific advisor, Dr. Eric P. Winer, and the organization's Scientific Advisory Board initiated a strategic shift in the focus of Komen research to translational studies that would contribute to significant reductions in breast cancer mortality and/or incidence within the decade.

Research-focused Grants:

- Investigator Initiated Research - up to \$600,000 over three years to support research exploring new ideas and novel approaches leading to reductions in breast cancer incidence and/or mortality within the decade.
- Career Catalyst Research and Career Catalyst in Disparities Research - up to \$450,000 over three years to support combined programs of research and mentoring that will further research independence for scientists in the early stages of their career.
- Promise Grants - up to \$7.5 million over five years to support multi-disciplinary research contributing to the aggressive translation of scientific discoveries into clinical tools and applications with the greatest potential to significantly reduce breast cancer incidence and/or mortality within the next decade.

Training-focused Grants

- Postdoctoral Fellowships - up to \$180,000 over three years to expand the skills and expertise of breast cancer researchers and position trainees for independent careers in breast cancer research.
- Post Baccalaureate in Disparities Research - up to \$135,000 per student over three years to support training for students very early in their career to allow them to begin to define meaningful career paths focused on disparities in breast cancer.