

### Research Saves Lives

Maintaining a healthy weight makes a difference when it comes to breast cancer:

- ✓ Being obese or overweight after menopause can increase your risk of breast cancer by as much as 30-60 percent.
- ✓ Being overweight or gaining weight after breast cancer diagnosis may increase the risk of cancer coming back (recurrence).
- ✓ Breast cancer survivors who are overweight tend to have a lower survival rate and quality of life.

**2/3**  
of U.S. adults are overweight or obese

The higher risk of breast cancer for women who gain weight is likely due to higher levels of estrogen in the body. Fat cells make estrogen; extra fat cells result in more estrogen in the body and estrogen can make certain types of breast cancers develop and grow.

Still, the link between extra weight and breast cancer is complicated and affected by other factors. For example, the location of the extra weight matters. Extra fat around the belly area may increase risk more than the same amount of extra fat around the thighs or hips. In addition, weight affects the risk for pre- and postmenopausal women differently.

Exercise is one way to help maintain a healthy weight, though the benefits of exercise go beyond just weight loss. Women who get regular exercise may have a lower risk of getting breast cancer, a better chance of surviving breast cancer and a lower risk of having cancer recur. Regular exercise can also increase positive mood and improve physical condition, which in turn can enhance quality of life.



Learn more about obesity and breast cancer  
<http://sgk.mn/1o16eDn>

### Our Research Investment

More than **\$37 million** in **60 research grants** and more than **25 clinical trials** focused on obesity, weight and exercise

### What We're Investigating



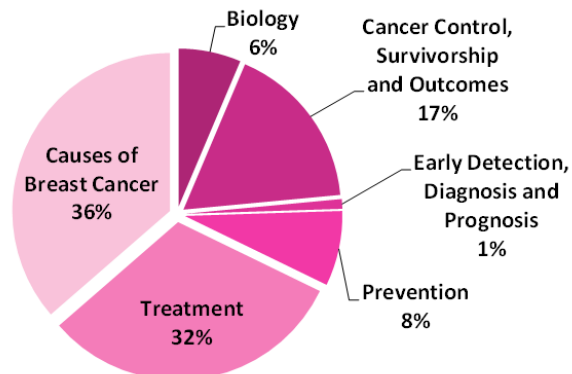
Determining how obesity increases the risk of developing breast cancer and whether weight loss can decrease this risk



Studying how obesity causes inflammation and contributes to the development of aggressive or drug-resistant breast cancers or causes recurrence of breast cancer



Identifying the genetic and behavioral factors that contribute to the higher rates (disparities) of obesity and breast cancer mortality in African-American women



Topic Area of Investment



Read more about targeting obesity to prevent breast cancer from Komen-funded researchers at the University of Colorado Cancer Center, in Komen's Science Buzz series  
<http://sgk.mn/NAN2Xj>

### What We've Learned from Komen-funded research



Drugs used to treat diabetes such as metformin may also help prevent breast cancer in some overweight or obese women.



Exercise such as weight training or yoga may help breast cancer survivors reduce their body fat or improve their quality of life by reducing side effects of treatment, like fatigue or insomnia.



Diabetes appears to increase the risk of developing and dying from breast cancer, especially in obese women (BMI greater than 30).



Learn more about breast cancer



More Komen-funded Research Stories



Get Involved & Support Komen Research