



KOMEN'S COMMITMENT TO WOMEN LIVING WITH METASTATIC BREAST CANCER

Metastatic breast cancer (MBC) diagnosis, treatment and survivorship is a complex experience. Medical jargon and lack of information can exacerbate an already frightening event. Susan G. Komen for the Cure® has developed a wide array of [educational materials](#) to help MBC patients and their caregivers become informed advocates for themselves and their loved ones during this stressful time.

Komen research dollars have been invested in every aspect of [metastasis research](#) from biology, prevention and early detection to treatment. In just the past six years, nearly **\$79 million** in funding has been awarded to help interrogate why cancer spreads, discover which genes can suppress tumor growth, develop therapeutics to target metastasis and find ways to help the immune system fight metastasis.

In addition, Komen funding allowed 100 women to attend the 2012 Living Beyond Breast Cancer's [Annual Conference for Women Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer](#), and Komen Affiliates across the nation are funding programs that offer support and assistance to women living with MBC.

As research advances, women are living longer with MBC; some live with their cancer for many years. These survivors often defy our expectations of what it means to have metastatic breast cancer.



In 2001 Cindy Colangelo was diagnosed first with DCIS and 8 years later with HER2+ breast cancer. After surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation treatment and trastuzumab Cindy's doctor told her, **"Have a great life!"**

Cindy believed that she was protected from ever having to face breast cancer again by her previous surgeries. So when she found a third lump in 2011, she was horrified to learn that the cancer had metastasized to her clavicle and lungs. The oncologist at a major cancer center was straightforward, saying, **"your treatment options are not good. This is not a sprint. This is going to be a marathon and it is not good."**

"When I hear that people have been living with metastatic disease for five, ten or twenty years, I think, 'Look at where we've come and where we are now. I'm that far ahead of the game.' Through research and clinical studies we've been able to gather information and make the future better. I feel like I am in the right time."

To date, Cindy has participated in three clinical trials and she has learned that she will be in treatment for the rest of her life. Despite this constant treatment, Cindy continues to be an active volunteer and fundraiser for Komen. She first became involved by participating in the Race for the Cure in the mid-80s. Later, she narrated a Sing for the Cure event. More recently, Cindy participated in a Metastatic Round Table at Komen Headquarters in January. Cindy is also part of the [Dallas Affiliate](#) Speaker's Bureau and she will walk in the [Dallas 3-Day](#) event for the second time this November. Click [here](#) to read more about Cindy's story.

Cindy isn't alone. There are an estimated 155,000 women living with MBC in the US alone, every one with a story and a voice. Among these are Bridget Spence, a powerful speaker and an amazing young woman who attended the 2012 Komen Leadership Conference where she spoke with Komen Affiliates from across the nation. In honor of October 13th, **Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day**, we share with you [Bridget's powerful message](#).

Be on the lookout for both Cindy and Bridget in a variety of print, social media and [television](#) ads this October! We encourage you to honor these and all women living with MBC this October 13th.

For more inspiring stories of survival, visit the [Chronicles of Hope Series](#) on the Research and Scientific Programs page of [Komen.org](#).