

Stage IV Breast Cancer



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This NCCN QUICK GUIDE™ sheet summarizes several key points and recommendations from the complete *NCCN Guidelines for Patients®: Stage IV Breast Cancer*. The complete guidelines explain which tests and treatments are recommended by experts in cancer. To view and download the guidelines, visit NCCN.org/patients or, to order printed copies, visit Amazon.com.

NCCN Guidelines for Patients®
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What is metastatic breast cancer?

It is cancer that has spread beyond the breast to a distant site. Distant sites include bones, lungs, liver, and the brain. Stage IV breast cancer is metastatic cancer that was found at diagnosis.	<u>8</u>
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What tests do I need before treatment?

Tests that look for signs of disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Medical history ■ Physical exam ■ CBC ■ Liver function tests 	<u>10</u>
Tests that show where the cancer has spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CT scan of your chest ■ MRI scan of your brain if you have certain symptoms ■ CT or MRI of your belly area and maybe between your hip bones ■ Bone scan or sodium fluoride PET/CT ■ FDG PET/CT may be done especially if other tests are unclear ■ X-rays of bones may be needed 	<u>12</u>
Tests of cell parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hormone receptor test ■ HER2 receptor test ■ Genetic testing if you are likely to have hereditary breast cancer—passed down from parent to child 	<u>14</u>

What treatment option is the most favored?

A clinical trial. A clinical trial is a type of research that studies how safe and helpful a treatment is. Ask your doctors if there is a clinical trial that you could join. Also ask about the pros and cons of that trial.	<u>26</u>
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What are other treatment options?

<p>For hormone receptor-positive breast cancer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chemotherapy may be given first if the cancer is quickly growing within internal organs. ■ If you're premenopausal, options include treatments that limit the ovaries from making hormones given with other hormone therapy. ■ If you're postmenopausal, options are treatments that block hormones from cancer cells or block a protein that makes estrogen. 	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p>
<p>For breast cancer that doesn't respond to 3 hormone regimens given one right after the other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If HER2-negative cancer, an option is chemotherapy. ■ If HER2-positive cancer, options are targeted treatments that block HER2 from cancer cells given with or without chemotherapy. 	<p style="text-align: right;">30</p>
<p>For hormone receptor-negative breast cancer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If HER2-negative cancer, an option is chemotherapy. ■ If HER2-positive cancer, options are targeted treatments that block HER2 from cancer cells given with or without chemotherapy. ■ Hormone therapy may be given if cancer has spread to bones, soft tissue, or if not causing symptoms, the internal organs. 	<p style="text-align: right;">31</p>

Is the treatment working?

<p>Different types of tests will be repeated on a regular basis to check treatment results. Some tests will be the same as those given before treatment.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">41</p>
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What if the cancer grows during treatment?

<p>Often, one treatment is used until it stops working and then another is started. Some women live for years with a high quality of life when following this plan.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">27</p>
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