Research Saves Lives

HER2-positive breast cancer (HER2+) is a subtype of breast cancer that makes too much of a protein called HER2. HER2 normally helps a healthy breast cell grow and divide. But in about 25 percent of breast cancers, the HER2 gene doesn’t work properly and makes too many copies of itself. As a result, HER2+ breast cancers tend to grow faster and are more likely to spread than other types of breast cancer.

Fortunately, therapies that specifically target HER2, such as trastuzumab (Herceptin®), are very effective and have had a significant impact on breast cancer survival for women with HER2+ breast cancer.

In spite of these advances, some HER2+ breast cancers do not respond to these therapies or become resistant to therapy. Komen is dedicated to finding new strategies for treating HER2+ breast cancer and identifying which women are most likely to respond to them.

Read about breast cancer survivor Bonnie Olsen’s journey with HER2-positive breast cancer in our Chronicles of Hope series. [http://sak.mn/IASlgPh](http://sak.mn/IASlgPh)

Learn more about HER2-positive breast cancer [http://sak.mn/IASlC0Q](http://sak.mn/IASlC0Q)

Our Research Investment

More than $88 million in over 170 research grants and more than 20 clinical trials focused on HER2+ breast cancer

What We’re Investigating

- Developing and testing new drugs that target HER2, including new drug combinations, gene therapy and vaccines
- Identifying the genes and other factors that cause resistance to HER2 therapies
- Identifying biological markers that can be used to predict which women will respond to or become resistant to HER2 therapies

What We’ve Learned from Komen-funded research

- A drug that targets a protein called sEcad may be used to treat HER2+ cancer cells that are resistant to Herceptin®.
- Combinations of vaccines and other immunotherapies that use the body’s own immune system may be able to improve survival for women with advanced HER2+ breast cancer.
- A simple blood test that measures specific biological markers may be used to predict who will respond or become resistant to Herceptin treatment.

Learn more about breast cancer [http://sak.mn/Is3Km4i](http://sak.mn/Is3Km4i)