

Support for People With Metastatic Breast Cancer



Metastatic breast cancer can change the kinds of help you need



Being diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer (MBC) can change your life both physically and emotionally. This brochure describes the types of support you may want during these changes.

Your emotional needs may change



Every person reacts differently to learning they have MBC. There is no right or wrong way to feel about your diagnosis.

Coming to terms with having MBC is a personal, often difficult, journey. If you're struggling emotionally, you're not alone.

Some people with MBC have depression or anxiety. These diseases occur when feelings of sadness or worry don't go away or get in the way of living your normal life. Tell your doctor if you feel depressed or anxious, especially if these feelings don't get better with time. Depression can feel like emptiness, sadness, hopelessness, or being unable to feel joy. Anxiety can feel like restlessness, irritability, difficulty concentrating, or difficulty controlling your worries.

Though it can be difficult, relying on loved ones and support groups can be important to your well-being.

Emotional problems are common with MBC



Up to

3 in 5

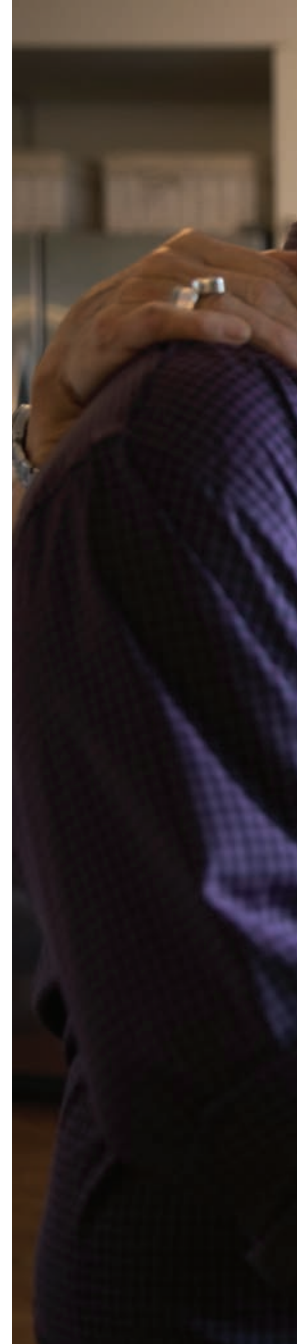
people experience depression.¹⁻³



Nearly

1 in 2

people experience anxiety.²





Your physical needs may change



MBC may have different effects on your body, such as fatigue, depending on where new cancer develops. These effects can make it hard to stay active or go out with friends.

Treatments for MBC may cause fatigue and other side effects that can make some activities difficult.

Be sure to talk to your doctor about what kind of physical help you may need. It can be difficult to ask for help and rely on others, but your loved ones want to help you however they can. Support groups can also assist you in finding help with housework, transportation, and other tasks.

“I want to be that person who I’ve always been, even though I know that I’ve changed a lot. I had to change a lot. You grieve over that loss.”

— Person with MBC

Staying connected to people can help



MBC can make you want to avoid people. You may not want to let others see you ill, or you may be tired of talking about your diagnosis.

In one study, almost half the people surveyed said it was hard to talk about their disease with loved ones.

But being with your friends and family can lower your stress and improve your overall well-being. Many people find MBC is a chance to deepen their connections with loved ones.

Support comes from many sources



Your partner

Romantic partners can be a great source of emotional and physical support and day-to-day care. But, your partner may also feel sadness, anxiety, and stress about your diagnosis and care. They may want to find their own support group or therapist to talk through their problems.

Taking an “us versus the problem” approach can help couples coping with MBC diagnosis. Couples who talk together about their stresses and needs can often have an easier time facing challenges together.



Family and friends

Your family and friends will want to support you. They will often be eager to help with day-to-day activities like cooking, cleaning, transportation, and errands.





Support



Professional help

Sometimes you need more help than your family and friends can give. Patient navigators help you manage your healthcare needs, like making appointments or filling prescriptions. Your healthcare team, hospital, or insurance plan may be able to help you find professional help.



Healthcare team

Your doctor can do more than just give you information and treatments. They can answer questions about living with MBC. They can help advise you on treatment of common conditions like depression and anxiety. They can also refer you to other healthcare providers like physical therapists and psychiatrists, if necessary.

“It’s me who is making myself alone. It’s not because my family and my friends don’t want to support me—it’s because of me not telling them or not asking them for help.”

— Person with MBC



Meet others with MBC in a support group



Support groups are a great way to meet people who understand what you're going through. They are also an opportunity to help others. You may want to join a general support group for breast cancer or one just for people with MBC.

If an in-person group won't work for you, you may find support online. Nonprofits, foundations, and social media groups all offer support online.

Some people prefer individual therapy



Talking to a therapist one-on-one works well for many people with MBC. There are many different types of therapists, ranging from psychiatrists to social workers, but all licensed therapists are qualified to provide mental health care. Your insurance provider may cover some or all of the cost of mental health care and may refer you to a therapist.

“When it comes to some of the more difficult emotional conversations, I think I lean more heavily on my sisters for that.”

— Person with MBC

The resources below can help you find more information and referrals for the support needs of people with MBC.

Learn more about MBC and finding support at:
LillyOncology.com

Advocacy groups

Metastatic Breast Cancer Network ([mbcn.org](https://www.mbcn.org))

- Support group directory
- Financial assistance information
- Information for newly diagnosed patients and about research studies and end-of-life care

American Cancer Society ([cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org))

- Support group directory
- Information for caregivers
- Financial assistance information
- Information for newly diagnosed patients and about research studies and end-of-life care

National Cancer Institute ([cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov))

- Information for caregivers
- Financial assistance information
- Information for newly diagnosed patients and about end-of-life care

REFERENCES: **1.** Depression and metastatic breast cancer. [Breastcancer.org](https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/types/recur_metast/stop_treat/palliative/depression). https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/types/recur_metast/stop_treat/palliative/depression. Updated January 29, 2020. Accessed November 17, 2021. **2.** Park EM, Gelber S, Rosenberg SM, et al. Anxiety and depression in young women with metastatic breast cancer: a cross-sectional study. *Psychosomatics*. 2018;59(3):251-258. doi:10.1016/j.psych.2018.01.007. **3.** Hajj A, Hachem R, Khoury R, et al. Clinical and genetic factors associated with anxiety and depression in breast cancer patients: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Cancer*. 2021;21(1):872. doi:10.1186/s12885-021-08615-9

For informational purposes only. Not an endorsement of any Lilly product.
VV-MED-115983©2021 Lilly USA, LLC. All rights reserved.

Hotlines

Cancer Support Community Helpline

- Helpline (toll-free, Mon-Fri, 9 am-9 pm, ET):
1-888-793-9355
- Online chat (Mon-Fri, 9 am-9 pm, ET):
cancersupportcommunity.org

If you are feeling significant emotional distress and having suicidal thoughts, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Call toll-free, 24 hours per day:
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Online chat available at:
suicidpreventionlifeline.org