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# Web Exclusive: Metastatic Breast Cancer Research Grows

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Many cancer-fighting drugs are first tested in patients with metastatic cancer that hasn't responded to approved therapies. This is why many drugs are first approved for metastatic cancer before they are tested in early-stage disease.

With all of the treatments available for metastatic breast cancer, patients have many options, which are helping them live longer and with a better quality of life. Below are a few articles that have recently appeared in *CURE* that discuss treatment options for metastatic breast cancer.

- > At the 2008 annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology in Chicago, several presentations focused on the treatment of metastatic breast cancer, including results from the phase III AVADO trial, which studied two doses of Avastin (bevacizumab), an antiangiogenic agent that blocks blood vessel growth to tumor sites, in combination with Taxotere (docetaxel). When treated with the combination, women with previously untreated recurrent or metastatic breast cancer were less likely to have their disease progress than patients on Taxotere alone. Read about the AVADO trial and more in the Summer 2008 issue.
- > After studies showed it delayed cancer growth, Avastin was granted accelerated approval for use with Taxol (paclitaxel) as initial therapy for metastatic HER2-negative breast cancer in February 2008. Clinical trials continue to study the drug in the metastatic setting for survival data. Avastin is also approved for advanced lung and colorectal cancers. For more, read *Drugs in the News* in the Spring 2008 issue.
- > This past December, breast oncologists, researchers, and advocates converged in San Antonio for the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium, one of the world's top breast cancer research conferences. Some of the more anticipated news included a phase III study that showed Xeloda (capecitabine) and Tykerb (lapatinib) delayed progression of advanced breast cancer; a phase II trial that demonstrated the same combination reduces brain metastases; and an early-phase study that confirms a promising new drug, pertuzumab, is safe

enough to proceed to larger-scale trials.

> In Winter 2007, *CURE* produced the Patient's Guide to Metastatic Cancer, which included information on predicting the risk of breast cancer recurrence, dealing with psychosocial and physical side effects, and new treatment options for advanced breast cancer, such as reformulations of older chemotherapies, hormonal therapies, and new targeted agents.

> The 2007 Breast Cancer Special Issue touched on how old and new drugs are being combined to treat metastatic disease by targeting certain proteins and hormones that help cancer cells to grow and multiply.