

DOCUMENT TITLE: Breast Cancer - Staging Overview
SOURCE: National Cancer Institute (NCI)
DOMAIN: Oncology - Breast Cancer
LANGUAGE: English
DOCUMENT TYPE: Disease Staging Overview
CLINICAL CONTEXT: Prognostic classification (non-therapeutic)
PURPOSE OF BREAST CANCER STAGING

Breast cancer staging describes how far the cancer has spread in the body.

Stage information is used to:

- Plan treatment
- Estimate prognosis
- Compare outcomes across patients

HOW BREAST CANCER STAGE IS DETERMINED

Breast cancer stage is determined using:

- Tumor size and extent (T)
- Lymph node involvement (N)
- Presence of distant metastasis (M)
- Tumor grade
- Biomarker status

Staging may be clinical (before surgery) or pathological (after surgery).

STAGE 0 BREAST CANCER

Stage 0 breast cancer is noninvasive.

Abnormal cells are present but have not spread beyond their original location.

An example is ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS).

STAGE I BREAST CANCER

Stage I breast cancer is early-stage invasive cancer.

The tumor is small and may be limited to the breast or nearby lymph nodes.

STAGE II BREAST CANCER

Stage II breast cancer involves a larger tumor and/or spread to nearby lymph nodes.

The cancer has not spread to distant organs.

STAGE III BREAST CANCER

Stage III breast cancer is locally advanced.

Cancer has spread to multiple lymph nodes or nearby structures such as the chest wall or skin.

STAGE IV BREAST CANCER

Stage IV breast cancer is metastatic.

Cancer has spread to distant organs such as:

- Bone
- Liver
- Lung
- Brain

RECURRENT BREAST CANCER

Recurrent breast cancer is cancer that returns after treatment.

Recurrence may be:

- Local
- Regional
- Distant

Recurrent cancer is reassessed using diagnostic and imaging tests.

DOCUMENT SCOPE

This document provides an overview of breast cancer stages.

It does not include treatment recommendations.