



YSC Research Agenda

Defining the YSC Research Agenda

Questions specific to young women at risk for or diagnosed with breast cancer remain in virtually every area of research—from those related to optimal screening strategies to those involving post treatment, survivorship and quality of life. The YSC has developed the following research agenda based upon the discussions at our 2001 research symposium, the advice of our esteemed Medical Advisory Board and from the knowledge that YSC has as a result of being the only international organization focused on breast cancer in women aged 40 and under.

Please contact Debbie Haber, the YSC's Marketing and Communications Director, at debbieh@youngsurvival.org for permission to reprint any or all of this research agenda.



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CATEGORIES	PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS
Identification of Factors that Increase Risk of Breast Cancer in Young Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic Factors (both gene mutations and family history) • Prospective epidemiological studies • <i>Environmental, physical, and lifestyle factors</i> • <i>Pre-natal and In-utero exposures</i> • <i>Role of disease (chronic and infectious), as well as auto-immune deficiencies</i>
Fertility and Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of damage to and preservation of ovarian function • Risk of pregnancy subsequent to a breast cancer diagnosis on recurrence/development of new primary • <i>Understanding the mechanism of chemotherapy on the ovaries</i> • <i>Effect of fertility preservation procedures on breast cancer risk</i> • <i>Breast cancer during pregnancy</i> • <i>Long-term/late effects of chemotherapy exposure in utero on health of child</i>
Screening and Diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New screening modalities, both radiological and other methods • Improving current diagnostic modalities e.g. mammography, ultrasound and MRI • <i>Identification of other cancers and diseases that correlated with early-onset breast cancer</i> • <i>Access to care and other socio-economic factors that affect screening and timely diagnosis</i> • <i>New diagnostic modalities for occult metastases</i>
Quality of Life and Survivorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexuality issues, including loss of libido and safety of estrogen supplements • Long-term prospective studies on both recurrence and psychosocial issues e.g. depression/anxiety, childbearing, marriage • <i>Effect of treatment on cardiac health, bone-density and other chronic conditions</i> • <i>OB/GYN follow-up post treatment</i>



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Pathology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genomic and proteomic makeup of tumors • Tumor registries for young women • <i>Heterogeneity of breast cancer</i> • <i>Prognostic differences between breast cancers genetically predisposed and sporadic cancers</i>
Prevention of both primary cancer and recurrence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifestyle factors • Chemoprevention
Adjuvant and Metastatic Treatment (systemic and surgical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored treatment strategies for tumor and patient characteristics, both chemotherapy and hormonal • Development of more effective and less toxic treatments • <i>Development of local interventions to treat early stage breast cancer and prevent recurrence</i> • <i>Patients' decision-making process when considering lumpectomy vs. mastectomy</i>
Advocacy and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician attitudes and actions toward young women presenting with symptoms of breast cancer • Barriers to participation in clinical trial by young women at risk for or diagnosed with breast cancer • <i>Role of medical school education for primary care physicians and ob/gyns in educating about breast cancer in young women</i> • <i>Level of information shared by physicians with patients on all aspects of treatment and side-effects e.g., fertility, pregnancy, fatigue</i>
Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety of pregnancy after reconstructive procedures, e.g. TRAM and DIEP • New methods of reconstruction • <i>Role of society's expectation of beauty on young women's decision-making</i>