

Part 1 of a 3-part series on breast cancer

Despite the tremendous advances in research that have led to improved survival rates, breast cancer continues to be the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Canadian women and one of the leading causes of death.

For families affected by breast cancer, continued research critical

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation has helped drive significant advances in breast cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care over the past quarter century. As a result, today more women who receive a breast cancer diagnosis are not only surviving the disease but getting through it with vastly improved supports and a better quality of life.

Doug Inouye of Burlington, Ontario, has an intimate understanding of the changes that have occurred – he is a brother, husband and father of three breast cancer survivors diagnosed over a 20-year span. “When my sister had the disease in 1987, there wasn’t much research funding and little support,” he says. “She got the most information about what to expect from the woman in the bed beside her.”

By the time Mr. Inouye’s wife learned she had breast cancer in 1996, research projects funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and others had helped change that. More became known about how heredity could elevate the risk of breast cancer,

about the genes and hormones involved in breast cancer. Delivery of “personalized” treatment – targeting a patient’s unique biology – is getting closer, but continued

research is critical.

For women with breast cancer and their families – and for those who will experience a breast cancer diagnosis sometime in the

future, about one in nine Canadian women – the research being conducted by Dr. Wong and other researchers today represents their best hope for the future.

“My great wish now is that by the time my youngest granddaughters are grown, we will be living in a future without breast cancer,” says Mr. Inouye.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation celebrates great improvements in breast cancer survival rates, while addressing growing need for survivor support

As it marks its 25th anniversary, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF) celebrates many successes in its efforts to create a future without breast cancer.

With the generous support of Canadians, funds raised by Canada’s leading breast cancer organization have helped drive tremendous advances in the earlier detection, diagnosis, treatment and care of breast

cancer, leading to significant improvements in survival rates. Since CBCF was founded in 1986, the breast cancer death rate in Canada has fallen by more than 35 per cent and is currently the lowest it has been since 1950.

But CBCF is also intensifying efforts to provide the growing number of breast cancer survivors in Canada with ongoing supportive care to promote recovery and

well-being, and to reduce the impact of the disease. “Despite the great advances in survival rates, too many women with this disease are not getting the support they need for a high quality of life. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and our supporters are working to change that,” says Trish Bronsch, CEO of the foundation’s Prairies/NWT Region.

Online? Visit www.cbcf.org for more information.

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“Both my wife and daughter benefited from new chemotherapy developed in recent years. New treatments, improved screening and innovations in genetic research have all been made possible by breast cancer fundraising.”

Doug Inouye

which led both of the couple’s daughters to be extra vigilant.

In 2006, their youngest daughter learned she too had breast cancer. “Both my wife and daughter benefited from new chemotherapy developed in recent years, and my oldest daughter has the opportunity to benefit from breast cancer screening for high-risk women,” says Mr. Inouye. “New treatments, improved screening and innovations in genetic research have all been made possible by breast cancer fundraising.”

Mammography screening has been one of the leading advances over the last two decades, says Dr. Frances Wong, a radiation oncologist with the British Columbia Cancer Agency’s Fraser Valley Centre. “The ability to detect cancer early can lead to less invasive treatments and better outcomes,” she says.

When the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation was launched 25 years ago, treatment options were very limited: the accepted surgical treatment was radical mastectomy, and post-surgical chemotherapy drugs and hormones were still in early development.

“We learned over time that removing the lump in the breast plus radiation was often very effective,” Dr. Wong says. “We are looking at even more refinements; maybe we don’t need to radiate the whole breast, but just the area where the lump was.”

There is also growing recognition of the importance of ongoing physical, nutritional and psychological support for patients. “We have had good results with extending life for those with breast cancer, and now we are turning more attention to quality of life,” says Dr. Wong.

Today, the trend continues towards more targeted treatment with surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and other therapies, fuelled by growing knowledge



Brian’s wife was diagnosed with breast cancer the day before their wedding

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Part 2 of a 3-part series on breast cancer

With the support of Canadians across the country, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation has helped take a disease that was barely talked about 25 years ago and make it a nation-wide health care priority.

Breast cancer movement inspires sea change in awareness, research funding

Twenty-five years ago, breast cancer was still a poorly understood disease that was “whispered about,” recalls Nancy Paul, one of the early founders of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. She and a group of her friends in Toronto decided to do something to help bring breast cancer out from the shadows.

Their first step was to raise money and find a worthy research project to fund. “We had no idea what was going on with breast cancer research; nobody was talking about it,” she says. “We wrote to teaching hospitals in Ontario and elsewhere to see what we might support, and we got back a deluge of requests,” says Mrs. Paul. “None of us wanted to turn our backs on this clear need.”

After raising \$26,000 at a dinner featuring the Italian designer Valentino and giving it to a Toronto hospital for clinical trials, the volunteers formed the Toronto Breast Cancer Foundation with the aim of supporting more research, breast cancer awareness and education.

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Nancy Paul, one of the early founders of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation

Soon after, they were asked to advocate for a breast screening program in danger of not being passed by the Ontario legislature. Meetings with politicians and a letter-writing campaign were quickly organized and the program was approved. “It energized us to believe we could do more,” says Mrs. Paul. “We knew our next step was to make breast cancer a family issue and a national issue.”

Fuelled by this larger vision, the group changed the organization’s name to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and a national movement was born.

Over the next 25 years, the foundation and its supporters would help transform breast cancer from a taboo topic to one of Canada’s leading health causes, with women and men across the country proudly sporting pink ribbons, pink wigs and even pink bras to raise money and awareness for the disease.

“The movement has taken breast cancer from the closet to a community-wide concern,” says John Stanton, president of the Running Room, which sponsored the first breast cancer Run for the Cure in Toronto in 1992. “I saw first-hand the impact of the disease on women and their families, and I was blown away by the empowerment women gained from this event.” Inspired to do more, Mr. Stanton and his company continued to support the Run for the Cure as

it expanded Canada-wide.

Today, the chain of 111 stores provides participation forms and training programs for Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure participants,

and co-sponsors the Survivor Clinic Program. Running Room sales of Pink Ribbon Wear clothing have raised over \$840,000 for the foundation.

All the research funding and

education have made a significant difference, he says – but much more must be done. “We have to continue the fight to find a cure. There are still too many women struggling to survive, and

we are still losing too many to this disease.

“It’s like a marathon, with a whole team of people running. We’re approaching the finish line, but we’re not there yet.”

Run for the Cure volunteers raise millions in pursuit of a future without breast cancer

Since the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation was founded 25 years ago, it has raised and invested more than \$230 million in breast cancer research, education and awareness programs across Canada.

Canada’s first Run for the Cure was organized by a small group of volunteers in Toronto in 1992 and raised over

\$60,000. Vancouver joined the cause the following year, and by 1995, the Run for the Cure had expanded to 10 locations across Canada. In 1997, CIBC came on as title sponsor and the event was held in 17 locations.

In 2010, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure raised

a record \$33 million to support the foundation’s vision of creating a future without breast cancer. Now in its 20th year, the Run for the Cure takes place in 59 sites across the country and engages over 170,000 participants and volunteers, as well as thousands of other Canadians who donate to their fundraising efforts.

Online? Visit www.cbcbf.org for more information.

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Part 3 of a 3-part series on breast cancer

About 1 in 9 Canadian women will eventually be diagnosed with breast cancer. The high incidence rates – and the immense toll it takes on the mental, physical and financial health of so many women and families – make it an ongoing priority for funding and investment.

Courageous breast cancer patients gain access to new treatment

Researchers have gained important knowledge in recent years about how genes, cell proteins, key receptors and other biological factors can influence a woman's risk of developing breast cancer and how the disease is likely to progress.

These advances in understanding the biology of breast cancer have led to new therapies – treatments that act on specific biological processes underlying the cancer.

One example is Herceptin (trastuzumab), used for women with HER2 positive breast cancer. An aggressive form of the disease, 'HER2' affects approximately 20 per cent of breast cancer patients. Herceptin was the first molecular-based targeted treatment for metastatic breast cancer and is often described as "revolutionary."

"We have very strong data on Herceptin as an adjuvant (post-surgical) therapy in combination with chemotherapy for early-stage HER2 positive," says Dr. Kathleen Pritchard, a senior scientist at the Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre Research Institute and a professor at the University of Toronto. "Studies show that 50 per cent fewer of these patients have a recurrence of their cancer."

But the need for continued research and new treatments continues to be urgent.

"There are patients whose cancer recurs while on Herceptin," says Dr. Pritchard, who stresses the importance of con-

"CBCF Ontario and its supporters participated in an advocacy campaign...We were very concerned about the disparity in access for women in Ontario; the therapy costs \$40,000 a year, a significant financial burden for women and their families."

Beth Easton, Vice President, Grants and Health Promotion, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Ontario Region.

tinued research into new agents targeted at HER2, including for women with metastatic disease.

And 80 per cent of breast cancer patients aren't HER2 positive, she adds. "Those of us treating breast cancer patients would very much like to see new treatments for women with other forms, such as triple negative breast cancer (no HER2, estrogen or progesterone receptor)."

As new targeted therapies are developed, issues arise around access due to the comparatively

high cost. This was recently illustrated in Ontario, where breast cancer advocates fought for and achieved expanded access for Herceptin.

Studies of Herceptin have been on patients with tumours at least one centimetre in size, leading the Ontario government to provide OHIP coverage of the therapy only for women in this category. Some other provinces didn't have such a restriction.

Jill Anzarut of Toronto was denied the therapy because her tumour was smaller, but she was determined to challenge the

rules. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Ontario Region and its supporters participated in an advocacy campaign to allow all women in Ontario with HER2 positive breast cancer access to Herceptin under the provincial drug plan.

"Jill is a courageous patient advocate who took on this fight on behalf of women in Ontario," says Beth Easton, vice president, Grants and Promotion, with the foundation's Ontario Region. "We were very concerned about the disparity in access for women in Ontario; the therapy costs \$40,000 a year, a signifi-

cant financial burden for women and their families."

On May 12, 2011, the province announced that it would fund the treatment for women with smaller tumours under the Evidence Building Program, which will gather evidence to inform a decision on permanent funding.

"This means that approximately 100 more women in Ontario will be eligible to receive this drug, which can play a significant role in preventing recurrence in women with HER2 positive breast cancer," says Ms. Easton.

FUNDRAISING

Enter to win

The Eyewear Pink sunglass collection by Sun-dog Distributing is dedicated to all the women who have been affected by breast cancer, with a donation based on sales benefiting the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

Until July 31, you can enter a contest to win one of 50 pairs of Eyewear Pink "Believe" style sunglasses by visiting www.facebook.com/eyewearpink. (Find complete rules at www.eyewearpink.com.)

Eyewear Pink will also be donating an additional \$1 to CBCF for every pair of Eyewear Pink purchased off the www.eyewearpink.com website until July 31.



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Breast cancer continues to be a formidable foe

Despite the significant advances in research, treatment, support and survival rates, much more is needed to create a future without breast cancer. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and its supporters are working to help researchers and caregivers redouble their efforts to reduce the devastating impact of this disease.

- Breast cancer will affect an estimated 1 in 9 Canadian women during their lifetime.
- Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women and the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women in Canada.
- For 2011, it is estimated that 23,400 women in Canada will be diagnosed and 5,100 will die from the disease.
- Nearly 20 per cent of all new breast cancer cases in Canada will be in women under 50.
- An estimated 190 men in Canada will be diagnosed with breast cancer (less than 1 per cent of all new cases), and 55 will die from the disease.

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