

Press Release

Survey reveals: 88% of Western Europeans would like better information on breast cancer, misconceptions and lack of awareness of the disease still prevail

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[Oncology](#)

- Survey with 7,750 participants highlights the urgent need for more and improved access to information about breast cancer and metastatic breast cancer across Europe
- Results emphasise lack of knowledge of breast cancer severity, age of diagnosis and biomarker status

Munich, Cambridge – (January, 22 2025) – A new survey sponsored by Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca reveals that there is a need for more readily available information on breast cancer, with results revealing misconceptions and a lack of public awareness. The survey conducted across the major five European countries with 7,750 respondents found varying levels of public knowledge about breast cancer and metastatic breast cancer*.¹

Key results from the survey include:¹

- **Recognition of challenges in breast cancer:** More than one-third of respondents across all countries recognise that breast cancer has not been overcome, especially in Spain (49%) and the UK (46%) where the majority of respondents do not believe in a chance of cure.
- **Demand for readily available information:** 88% of respondents expressed a desire for more information about breast cancer. Respondents' top three areas of interest were information on new treatments, life expectancy and quality of life. 43% expressed concerns about the ease of understanding medical information on breast cancer.
- **Age misconception:** Half of the participants believe age does not impact the risk of developing metastatic breast cancer, although increased age is a significant risk factor.
- **Regional awareness gaps:** Across Europe, awareness of metastatic breast cancer varies, with 93%

of Spanish respondents having some understanding or certainty about the disease, compared to 59% in the UK.

- **Biomarker awareness:** Three quarters of respondents are unfamiliar with the concept of a biomarker, with awareness being highest in Spain (34%), followed by Italy (31%), Germany (23%) and lowest in France and the UK (both 18%).

Better awareness and understanding of breast cancer can lead to earlier detection and improved survival rates²

In Europe, approximately 558,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed each year, resulting in about 145,000 deaths.³ Even with established breast cancer screening programmes, it is estimated that 30% of people diagnosed with early-breast cancer will progress to develop metastatic disease, with 5% to 10% of breast cancers being diagnosed as metastatic (stage 4) at initial presentation.^{4,5}

Access to accurate and easy to understand healthcare information is critical, as increased awareness can lead to earlier detection and improved survival rates. Better understanding of metastatic breast cancer is essential for patients, families and caregivers to best manage care.²

“People should not have to experience breast cancer to be made aware of its impact and symptoms,” says Dr Fatima Cardoso, President at ABC (Advanced Breast Cancer) Global Alliance, Lisbon, Portugal. “Earlier detection of cancer can save lives. It is vital that information about breast cancer is easily accessible, readily available and easy to understand to help improve patient outcomes through their care and treatment. Increasing patient understanding of their cancer biomarkers, is essential to their care. Biomarkers provide important biological information about cancer severity and prognosis, are crucial to provide individualised treatment options and assist physicians in monitoring the cancer during and after treatment. Understanding biomarker status enables more personalised medicine approaches, targeting cancer cells more specifically and improving patients’ quality of life.”

“The results clearly show that despite the high incidence rate of cancer in Europe, there are still many misconceptions and information gaps,” says Dr Markus Kosch, Head of Europe and Canada Oncology Business Division, Daiichi Sankyo. “Greater public understanding of breast cancer and metastatic breast cancer is needed to empower the European population to seek the support they need at the earliest opportunity when they need it. Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca are committed to collaborating with patient advocacy groups to provide reliable information and resources. It is crucial that everyone has access to potentially life-saving information and knows exactly where to find it. This is not just true for breast cancer, but for all cancers.”

“These insights, coupled with the compelling statistics regarding the ongoing prevalence and impact of breast cancer reinforce that global leaders, policy experts, clinicians and patient advocates must continue to work together to prioritise breast cancer, especially metastatic disease,” says Greg Rossi, Senior Vice President Oncology, Europe and Canada, AstraZeneca. “Through our alliance with Daiichi Sankyo, we are committed to raising awareness and breaking down barriers to ensure that every patient with breast cancer has access to the right care and information about their diagnosis.”

About the survey

The online survey, sponsored by Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca, gathered insights from respondents across five European countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. There were around 1,550 participants from each country, with an average gender distribution of 52% female and 48% male. Participants were aged 18-years and older and the survey results were collected over 10 days in October 2024.¹

About the Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca Collaboration

Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca entered into a global collaboration to jointly develop and commercialise a antibody drug conjugate (ADC) in March 2019 and a second ADC in July 2020, except in Japan where Daiichi Sankyo maintains exclusive rights for each ADC.

About Daiichi Sankyo

Daiichi Sankyo is an innovative global healthcare company contributing to the sustainable development of society that discovers, develops and delivers new standards of care to enrich the quality of life around the world. With more than 120 years of experience, Daiichi Sankyo leverages its world-class science and technology to create new modalities and innovative medicines for people with cancer, cardiovascular and other diseases with high unmet medical need. For more information, please visit www.daiichi-sankyo.eu.

About AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca is a global, science-led biopharmaceutical company that focuses on the discovery, development and commercialisation of prescription medicines in Oncology, Rare Diseases and BioPharmaceuticals, including Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolism and Respiratory & Immunology. AstraZeneca operates in over 100 countries and its medicines are used by millions of patients worldwide. With a proud 100-year heritage in advancing UK science, today AstraZeneca is the UK's leading biopharmaceutical company. The company is based in five different locations across the UK, with its global headquarters in Cambridge. In the UK, around 8,700 employees work in research and development, manufacturing, supply, sales and marketing. We supply around 36 different medicines to the NHS. For more information, please visit www.astrazeneca.co.uk.

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References

¹ Breast Cancer Awareness Survey in Europe" conducted in October 2024 for the Daiichi-Sankyo | AstraZeneca Alliance with a sample size of 7,750 respondents across Germany, France, Europe, Italy and Spain.

² Birnbaum JK, Duggan C, Anderson BO, Etzioni R. Early detection and treatment strategies for breast cancer in low-income and upper middle-income countries: a modelling study. Lancet Glob Health. 2018 Aug;6(8):e885-e893.

³ GLOBOCAN. Europe. Cancer Today 2022. Available at: <https://gco.iarc.who.int/media/globocan/factsheets/populations/908-europe-fact-sheet.pdf>. Accessed January 2025.

⁴ Seely JM. Progress and Remaining Gaps in the Early Detection and Treatment of Breast Cancer. Curr Oncol. 2023 Mar 8;30(3):3201-3205.

⁵ Europa Donna. Metastatic Statistic Guidelines. Available at: <https://www.europadonna.org/metastatic/statistics-guidelines/>. Accessed January 2025.

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