

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ The total number of breast cancer patients covered by the report was 9,804.
- ▶ The mean age of the patients at diagnosis was 50.6 years and the median age at diagnosis was 49.3 years.
- ▶ Occurrence of breast cancer was highest between the ages of 40-59 in Hong Kong (70.1%).

Risk factors

- ▶ The 10 most common risk factors for breast cancer in the patients:

	%
Lack of exercise (<3 hours / week)	75.6
No breastfeeding	65.4
High level of stress (>50% of time)	37.5
Being overweight / obese	36.5
No childbirth / First live birth after age 35	24.3
Diet rich in meat / dairy products	14.5
Family history of breast cancer	14.5
Early menarche (<12 years old)	13.4
Use of hormone replacement therapy	6.9
Frequent night shift	4.7

Screening habits

- ▶ Awareness of breast cancer is weak in Hong Kong. Less than half of women (41.6%) attended regular clinical breast examination and less than a quarter of women conducted regular breast self-examination (24.1%) and mammography screening (21.6%).

Cancer characteristics, histological and biological characteristics and treatment for breast cancer

- ▶ Of the 9,594 patients, 84.9% self-discovered their breast cancer by chance.
- ▶ 81.3% were diagnosed at early stages (stages 0-II); 14.4% were diagnosed at advanced stages (stages III-IV) and 4.2% were unstaged. Of them, 7,599 patients (85%) had invasive breast cancer.
- ▶ 21.9% of the patients sought medical consultation within three months of the onset of symptoms.
- ▶ Mean invasive tumour size was 2.18cm. The mean tumour size of invasive breast cancer in self-detected cases vs. screen-detected cases: 2.3cm vs. 1.3cm. 43.3% of patients had invasive tumour between 2 to 5cm.
- ▶ Of the patients, 12.5% (1,203 patients) had in situ breast cancer with mean tumour size of 2.05cm (range: 0.02-9.2cm). 34.1% of patients had in situ tumour between 2 to 5cm.

Histological and biological characteristics of invasive and in situ cancers:

	Invasive %	In situ %
Histological type		
Ductal	84.6	91.6
Lobular	3.9	1.6
Others	11.5	6.8
Biological characteristics		
ER+	77.1	79.4
PR+	64.8	70.7
HER2+	21.9	29.4
Ki-67 index ≥ 14%	56.2	29.5
ER-PR-HER2-	11.9	—
Lymphovascular invasion	29.1	—

ER+/-: estrogen receptor positive / negative

PR+/-: progesterone receptor positive / negative

HER2+/-: human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 positive / negative

Treatment

- ▶ Within the patient cohort, the number of treatments received by patients showed a positive trend with increasing cancer stage.
- ▶ Half of the patients with stage 0 breast cancer were treated with a combination of two treatments.
- ▶ 42.7% of patients with stage I breast cancer were treated with a combination of three treatments.

	Total %	Treatment in private sector %	Treatment in public sector %	Stage					
				0 %	I %	IIA %	IIB %	III %	IV %
Surgery	98.2	61.9	38.1	99.2	99.9	99.8	99.6	61.9	
Breast conserving surgery	35.7	43.7	25.3	53.7	48.1	31.6	13.7	11.2	
Mastectomy	62.4	56.3	74.8	46.3	51.9	68.4	86.3	88.8	
Chemotherapy	60.8	17.4	82.6	—	39.1	82.4	92.1	93.5	86.7
Radiotherapy	61.7	18.5	81.5	51.4	53.4	58.2	77.9	93.3	65.4
Endocrine therapy	66.7	17.4	82.6	19.6	74.3	74.7	75.8	75.2	81.9
Targeted therapy	7.2	18.9	81.1	—	4.1	7.9	9.4	16.6	16.1

Treatment discomfort

Ranking	Treatment	% of patients with severe discomfort	Top complaints
1	Chemotherapy	56.1	Vomiting, Loss of appetite
2	Radiotherapy	12.4	Dry skin, skin burns
3	Surgery	10.2	Wound pain
4	Endocrine Therapy	8.0	Hot Flushes
5	Targeted Therapy	7.4	Fatigue

- ▶ Among all types of treatment, chemotherapy was the most distressing for patients. 56.1% of patients reported severe discomfort after chemotherapy and 26.3% of patients reported moderate discomfort.

Psychosocial impact of diagnosis and treatments

- ▶ Results showed that at the time of diagnosis, 34.1% of patients felt depressed, and 19.9% of patients were in disbelief. 10.8% worried about recurrence all the time.
- ▶ After treatment, 53.3% of patients felt that life is not fair.
- ▶ Patients aged 80 and over were less likely to have positive changes in the outlook of life after breast cancer diagnosis compared with patients aged 20-29 (31.6% vs. 69.2%).
- ▶ Younger patients were more likely to always worry about recurrence (15.4% in the 20-29 age group; 4.0% in the 80+ age group).
- ▶ 81.5% of patients reported lifestyle modifications after breast cancer diagnosis.
- ▶ The most common change in lifestyle was change in diet (73.7%), followed by increase in exercise (61.6%).
- ▶ The most common way of managing negative emotions reported by the patients was direct verbal expression (54.1%).