

An Unexpected Consequence Of Breast Cancer

(NAPSA)—Today's patient with breast cancer faces a daunting amount of information. With so many important issues to consider, bone health may not be at the top of a patient's agenda—and yet it is a critical issue across several stages of the cancer journey.

An estimated 2,632,005 women in the United States are living with breast cancer, yet many may not be aware of the potential threat to their bones. In early stages of breast cancer, women may receive hormone therapy as a treatment—this can cause bone loss and brittle and weak bones. As breast cancer advances it can spread to patients' bones, called bone metastases, which can affect up to 75 percent of patients with advanced breast cancer.

In both cases, once the patients' bones have become brittle and weak they are at risk for serious bone complications, including injury to the spinal cord, fractures or major procedures like surgery or radiation to the bone. These complications are associated with lower quality of life and can limit a patient's ability to do the things she wants.

“When facing breast cancer, women often do all that they can



What women with breast cancer need to know about cancer and bone health.

to learn about their disease—yet many are unaware of the consequences associated with cancer spreading to the bone,” said Cindy Geoghegan, CEO, Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization. “It is important for women to know that there are resources available to provide an education on the risks associated with cancer's spread.”

While up to 75 percent of patients with advanced breast cancer may develop bone metastases, a recent survey revealed that two-thirds of metastatic breast cancer patients (66 percent of 101) did not discuss treatment options for bone metastases with their physicians.

“Cancer's spread to the bone is a critical issue that often goes unrecognized until a serious consequence like a broken bone occurs,” said Wayne Keiser, M.D. “As a physician, I often see women who were not aware of their risks until they experienced it firsthand. Women and their caregivers can work with their physicians to better understand the complications associated with bone metastases.”

Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization, a leading cancer patient advocacy group, partnered with biotechnology company Amgen and a board of medical advisers to create an educational resource, the Bone Health in Focus™ breast cancer report. The report is available for women with breast cancer and their caregivers to help learn how cancer can affect the bones. The report features the personal experiences of breast cancer patients, and practical tips, and tools for effective communication—including a list of questions to ask your health care provider.

For more information or to download a free Bone Health in Focus report, visit www.BoneHealthinFocus.com.