

I Have HER2 Positive Metastatic Breast Cancer: Is My Treatment Working?

HER-2/neu (HER2) stands for “human epidermal growth factor receptor 2.” HER2 positive tumors make too many copies of the gene HER-2/neu, so too many HER-2/neu proteins (receptors) are produced. HER2 positive breast tumors tend to grow faster and are more likely to return. The good news is, HER2 positive breast cancer can respond to treatment targeting HER2. Also, a simple blood test can monitor how your HER2-targeted therapy is working.

How Do I Know I Am HER2 Positive?

To confirm HER2 positive status, a **HER-2/neu tissue test** is performed on a tissue sample (biopsy) from your breast tumor. HER-2/neu tissue tests check the amount of HER2 receptor protein and/or the number of HER-2/neu genes. Some women whose breast cancer has spread (metastasized) may be HER2 positive even if they were HER2 negative at an earlier stage of their disease. That is why HER2 testing is so important for women with metastatic disease.

How Is HER2 Positive Metastatic Breast Cancer Treated?

Available treatments that target the HER2 receptor are generally used in conjunction with chemotherapy. Trastuzumab (*Herceptin*) and lapatinib (*Tykerb*) are therapies that can help delay tumor progression and extend survival.

Is My Treatment Working?

- If serum HER-2/neu increases during treatment, your treatment may not be effective. Decreases in serum HER-2/neu levels suggest that your cancer is responding to treatment or has stabilized.
- By tracking changes in HER-2/neu levels during

HER2-targeted therapy, your healthcare provider will know earlier in the treatment process if other options should be considered.

- The Serum HER-2/neu test can be used with other clinical and imaging procedures to manage HER-2/neu positive metastatic breast cancer.



Is the Serum HER-2/neu Test Right for Me?

Talk to your healthcare team to learn more about monitoring your HER-2/neu status during therapy and whether the Serum HER-2/neu test may be appropriate for you. The Serum HER-2/neu test is reimbursed by most health insurance plans. For more information about the test, visit www.siemens.com/herstory.

How Is My HER2 Status Monitored During Treatment?

The **Serum HER-2/neu test** is a simple blood test used to measure HER2 protein levels in women with metastatic breast cancer during treatment with HER2-targeted therapies.

- The Serum HER-2/neu test is *not the same* as the HER-2/neu tissue test used to determine if you are eligible to receive HER2-targeted therapy.
- The serum test is ordered from a laboratory and can be done along with your routine blood work.
- The Serum HER-2/neu test measures HER-2/neu protein levels in your blood. Levels of 15 ng/mL or higher are considered elevated.