

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SANDHYA

By definition, high risk can be risk factors that a woman might have that would elevate her chance of getting breast cancer-- a family history of breast cancer. Even more important is the age at which the family member was affected with breast cancer, especially if diagnosed before 50. That would put somebody at much more higher risk of getting breast cancer than if their relative was diagnosed with breast cancer in their 80s.

PRUTHI:

Lifestyle factors that are associated with breast-cancer risk-- weight gain or obesity after menopause is a risk factor, or consuming alcohol at least two or more drinks a day every day would put somebody at high risk for breast cancer. And there's another one that we are starting to hear more about, and that's dense breast tissue. Dense breast tissue on a mammogram is that the proportion of the milk glands the milk ducts are making up more than 25, 50, or even 75% of their breast tissue.

Ductal carcinoma in situ-- that's like a contained cancer that's detected while the cancer was still within the milk duct. And an invasive cancer is a cancer that has broken through the wall of the duct and has a tendency to metastasize.

There are other factors in the diagnosis of breast cancer, as well as knowing the type. It's the hormone-dependent cancer or those that are not hormone-dependent. And these are markers that will also help us determine the biology of the tumor.

There's this better need to understand your family history, to understand who was affected with what cancers, and the age of the diagnosis, and be able to bring that information, and then to come to a high-risk breast center, where we can better put that information together. Our genetic counselor works very closely with our team to then go into a more in-depth pedigree of that family, and then help the patient look at genetic-testing options. And that would then pursue the next step of obtaining the blood test to assess for the BRCA gene or other genetic mutations that are now being newly determined to be associated with breast-cancer risk.

What women are seeing is that learning what all their options are, making sure that it's individualized to their cancer type, their specific medical history-- that they may be able to have a better outcome or better prognosis.

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