

## NAVIGATOR GUIDE:

# WALKING WITH A PATIENT DOWN THE PATH OF HR+, HER2- EARLY BREAST CANCER WITH A HIGH RISK OF RECURRENCE

The Navigator Guide is a resource that oncology nurses and navigators can use to assist patients and caregivers in the fight against early-stage breast cancer with a high risk of recurrence. This educational tool illustrates the most common journey steps, including treatment expectations, key therapy considerations, and survivorship and surveillance management.

### 1. DIAGNOSIS OF EARLY BREAST CANCER WITH A HIGH RISK OF RECURRENCE IS RECEIVED

~30% of patients with early breast cancer who present with  $\geq 4$  positive axillary lymph nodes (ALNs) or 1-3 positive ALNs and at least one of the following: histological grade 3; tumor size  $\geq 5$  cm; or Ki-67  $\geq 20\%$ , may recur within 5 years.<sup>1</sup>

#### Nurse Navigator Considerations:

- Educate on diagnosis, tumor characteristics, hormone receptors, and their impact on treatment planning and next steps<sup>2</sup>

#### Type, size, stage, grade, and biomarker results

- Facilitate the genetic testing process and educate on what testing will reveal about their disease and potential treatment options

#### Questions Your Patient May Ask:

- What are my surgery options? Will I be required to receive chemotherapy?

### 2. SUPPORTIVE CARE

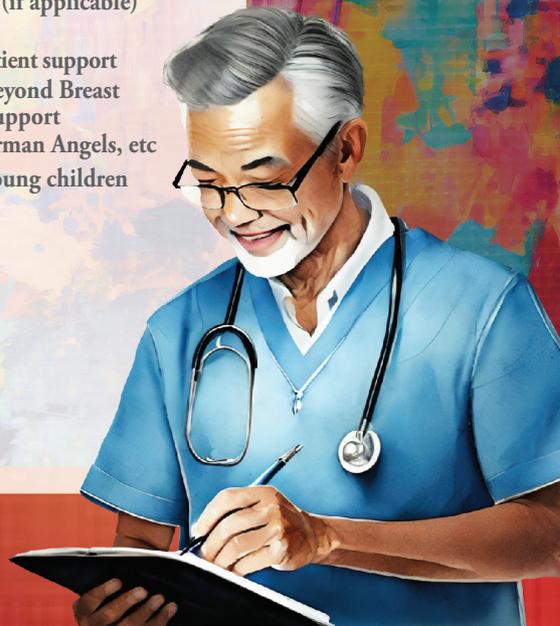
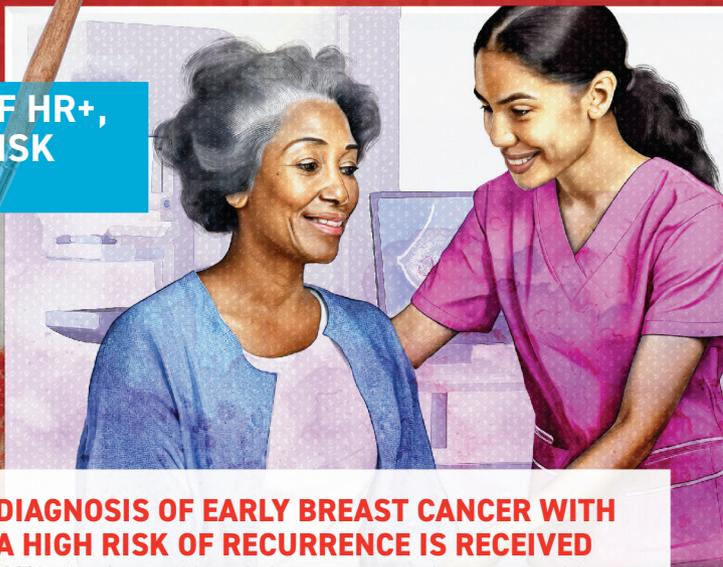
Starts at diagnosis and continues throughout cancer continuum

#### Nurse Navigator Considerations<sup>3</sup>:

- Promote communication among the multidisciplinary team
- Provide support with patients' body image concerns due to potential hair loss, lumpectomy/mastectomy, weight changes, etc
- Identify and address key barriers to care and areas for patient support<sup>2,4-6</sup>
  - Financial
  - Psychosocial
  - Logistical, transportation
  - Smoking cessation
  - Nutritional
  - Physical activity/therapy/occupational therapy
  - Genetic counseling (if applicable)
  - Spiritual
  - Patient advocacy/patient support
  - Komen, Living Beyond Breast Cancer, Cancer Support Community, Imerman Angels, etc
  - Caregiver/family/young children support
- Review treatment milestones and expectations, including long-term side effects and challenges<sup>2</sup>
- Reinforce importance of follow-ups and assist with rescheduling if necessary

#### Questions Your Patient May Ask:

- Who can I talk to about how I am feeling, my needs, and the challenges I am experiencing?



### 3A. TREATMENT PLANNING & SHARED DECISION-MAKING

The MDT and patient will decide the best treatment plan

Optimizing therapy may decrease the risk of recurrence in patients with early breast cancer.

- Chemotherapy before surgery<sup>7-9</sup>
- Hormone therapy

Post-surgery or adjuvant therapy (to prevent or reduce risk of recurrence)<sup>7,10,11</sup>

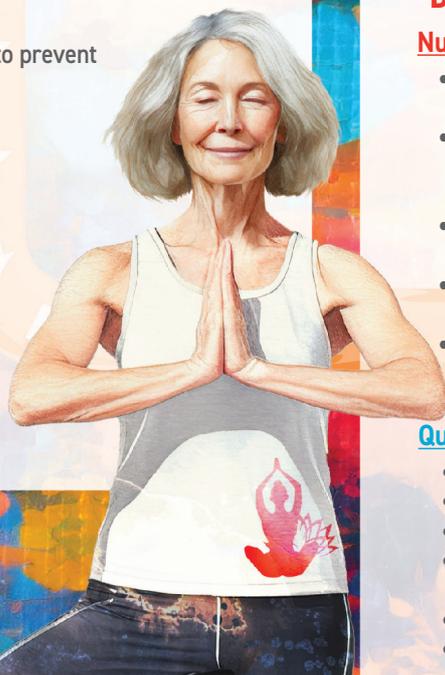
- Chemotherapy
- Radiation
- Targeted therapies

#### HR+<sup>8,11</sup>

- Hormone therapy
- Inhibitors—CDK4/6

#### BRCA genes, HR+, HER2-<sup>11</sup>

- PARP inhibitors
- Some combination of these treatment options



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### 3B. CONTINUED TREATMENT PLANNING & SHARED DECISION-MAKING

#### Nurse Navigator Considerations:

- Advocate for patient through shared decision-making and encourage discussion of treatment goals
- Provide resources on different treatment options, including side effects/adverse event management and when to report to HCP/ER<sup>2</sup>
- Reinforce importance of monitoring and reporting side effects/adverse events throughout treatment<sup>2</sup>
- Educate patient on the tools HCPs may utilize to manage adverse events, including dose modifications
- Encourage journal-keeping to record symptoms, side effects, and questions

#### Questions Your Patient May Ask:

- What are the goals of my treatment plan?
- How long will I need treatment?
- What side effects should I expect?
- What might happen with my treatment if I am unable to handle the side effects?
- Will I be able to continue to work during treatment?
- Who will be on my care team, and how will they be involved in my care?

### 4. SURVIVORSHIP & SURVEILLANCE

Follow-up visits/tests to assess treatment response

#### Nurse Navigator Considerations:

- Discuss survivorship care plan and reinforce follow-up and surveillance recommendations (eg, frequency, type, rationale)

Reinforce the importance of adherence to treatment as recommended by oncologist

- Educate on treatment-related side effects and how to report them
- Provide “return-to-work” support/resources
- Assess patient distress and provide resources for support, mental health, and counseling

Ensure appropriate and effective adverse event management to help assist with treatment adherence

#### Questions Your Patient May Ask:

- To whom and when do I report side effects or new symptoms?
- How often will my follow-up visits be?
- What are some ways I can improve my quality of life?
- How can I manage my stress/anxiety, especially related to fear of recurrence?



For more information and patient resources, scan the QR code

#### References

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