



# B2B Research Program Newsletter

ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES

Issue #7, Summer 2016

## B2B Study Update

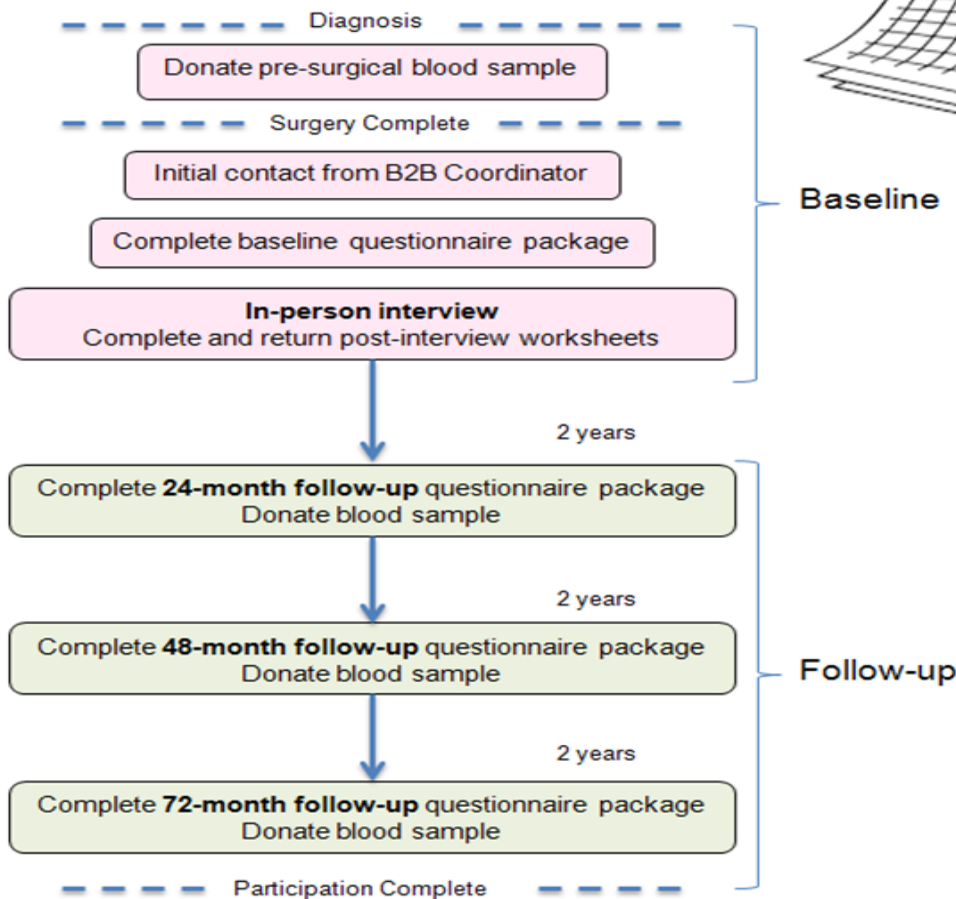
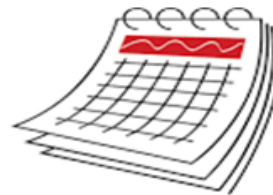
### 72 Month Follow-Up

The final phase of the B2B Study began in February of 2016. Participants who were among the first to join the B2B Research Program are being contacted to participate in the 72 Month Follow-Up component by filling out questionnaires pertaining to diet history, physical activity, and general medical history in the past two years as well as provide a small blood sample.

to date, we have sent out eleven 72 Month Follow-Ups, and will be contacting those individuals in the next few months who started out with us six years ago. Thank you to all who started with the B2B Study and continue to support the study. We appreciate your dedication and commitment to breast cancer research.

We will continue to update you via email to send out newsletters and updates, including research results and papers that have been published. If you are not sure whether or not you have provided your email address to us, please contact Margo at (403) 476-2579 or

[margo.hopkins@ahs.ca](mailto:margo.hopkins@ahs.ca)



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## B2B Research

### FIRST PARTICIPANT TO COMPLETE THE B2B STUDY!



Dorothy Sutton, first B2B participant to complete the study

“I REMEMBER VIVIDLY WALKING THROUGH THE DOORS AND INTO THE LOBBY, AND I FROZE!”

In 2010, I was in the midst of tests prior to hiatal hernia surgery and I had a couple of ‘twinges’ in my left breast; this I ignored as I understood there are no symptoms for breast cancer. After a couple more incidents I went to see my G.P. who couldn’t feel or find any reason for this, but sent me for a mammogram anyway. The technician saw something and decided to do an ultra-sound too, and found a suspicious area, which warranted a biopsy. It came back positive for malignancy, and I started down the road for treatment.

The first step was a consultation with surgeon Dr John Graham, who patiently walked me through the

steps and guided me in decision-making regarding surgery. I opted for a lumpectomy and was scheduled 2 weeks later for the procedure. The surgery went well, the lymph nodes were clear and it was decided to go with radiation only, no chemotherapy, and an appointment was made for me at the Tom Baker. I remember vividly walking through the doors and into the lobby, and I froze! It all became so real, I thought “this is where I am going to die”. I anticipated a sombre place, all “gloom and doom” and I couldn’t have been more wrong. Everyone from cleaners, technicians, nurses, doctors, everyone I came in contact with always had a smile, a

cheery “good morning”. EVERYONE had a positive outlook and I knew I was in the right place. After the treatment I had regular appointments at Women’s Health Centre with Dr Graham, there also the mood was always positive. I count my blessings for all the staff (and my family) for helping me through this. THANK YOU!

My involvement made me realize how many women out there were affected by this dreadful disease, and how fortunate I was to have been one of the lucky ones to have had successful treatment. I also realized that in some way, my experience could possibly benefit others in the future. I hope so.

### Welcome B2B Summer Students

#### Nicholas Massaro

Nicholas is entering the third year of his Bachelor of Science, majoring in Kinesiology. He has been an avid volunteer at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre and has now joined the B2B research team as a summer student, supported by a PURE Summer Studentship Award from the University of Calgary. He hopes to gain invaluable knowledge and experience in the world of cancer epidemiology. With aspirations of attending medical school, Nicholas spends most of his time

learning and studying and enjoys working out and riding his bike in his spare time. Nicholas believes that preventative research is the key to further advancing our knowledge on cancer survival and will use his experience as a summer student to educate others of its crucial importance.

#### Godsent Ehiremen

Godsent Ehiremen is a fourth year undergraduate student at the University of

Calgary’s Cumming School of Medicine, Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program. His research interests include immunology, cancer biology and epidemiology. Godsent is also involved with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) where he tutors new high school immigrants in the basic sciences (chemistry, biology and physics). In his spare time, Godsent enjoys working out and track and field.

## Breast cancer survival among young women: a review of the role of modifiable lifestyle factors.

Authors Darren Brenner, Nigel Brockton, et al. (2016) *Cancer Causes & Control* April 2016, Vol. 27, Issue 4, pp 459-472

Dr. Nigel Brockton, Principal Investigator for the B2B Program, recently co-authored a review paper on breast cancer in young women. A brief abstract is provided here, the full paper available online in the above journal.

Almost 7 % of breast cancers are diagnosed among women age 40 years and younger in Western populations. Clinical outcomes among young women are worse. Early age-of-onset increases the risk of contralateral breast cancer, local and distant recurrence, and subsequent mor-

tality. Breast cancers in young women (BCYW) are more likely to present with triple-negative (TNBC), TP53-positive, and HER-2 over-expressing tumors than among older women. However, despite these known differences in breast cancer outcomes and tumor subtypes, there is limited understanding of the basic biology, epidemiology, and optimal therapeutic strategies for BCYW. Several modifiable lifestyle factors associated with reduced risk of developing breast cancer have also been implicated in improved prog-

nosis among breast cancer survivors of all ages. Given the treatment-related toxicities and the extended window for late effects, long-term lifestyle modifications potentially offer significant benefits to BCYW. In this review, we propose a model identifying three main areas of lifestyle factors (energy imbalance, inflammation, and dietary nutrient adequacy) that may influence survival in BCYW. In addition, we provide a summary of mechanisms of action and a synthesis of previous research on each of these topics.

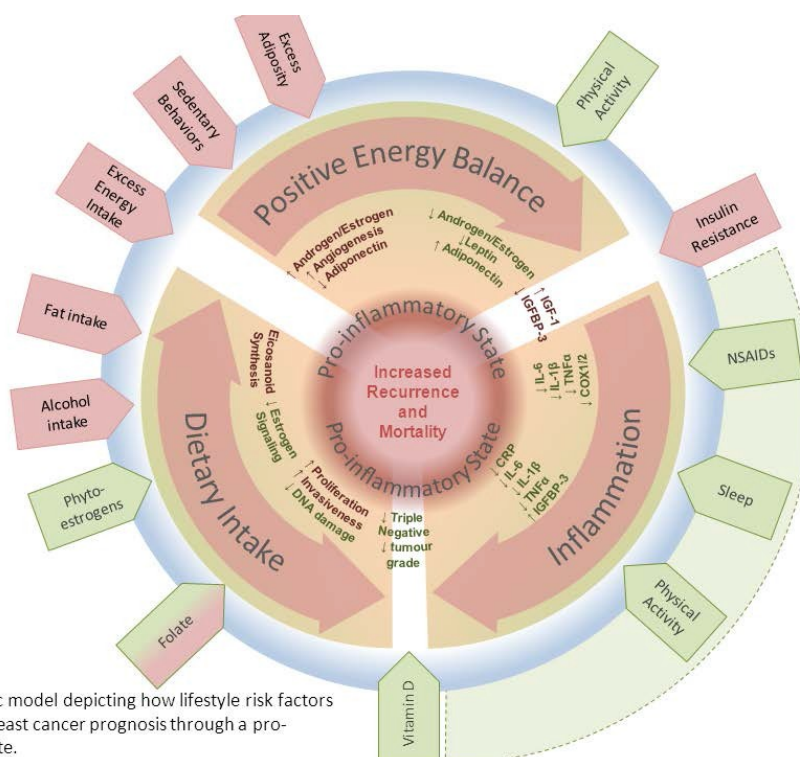
## BREAST CANCER STATS AND FACTS

- ◆ About 1 in 5 breast cancers will be diagnosed in women less than 50 yrs of age
- ◆ One in nine Canadian women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime
- ◆ 45% of cancer in Alberta is caused by factors that we can change
- ◆ 8% of new cases are linked to being overweight
- ◆ 17% of new cases are linked to not being active enough
- ◆ Breast cancer mortality rates have decreased by 44% since 1986
- ◆ Breast, prostate, lung, and colorectal cancers are the four most diagnosed cancers in Canada

Sources:

Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation

Alberta Prevents Cancers



Proposed biologic model depicting how lifestyle risk factors may influence breast cancer prognosis through a pro-inflammatory state.

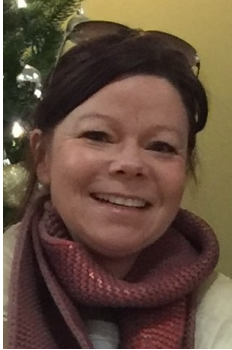
ABOUT 2,350 WOMEN IN ALBERTA WERE DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER IN 2012

**Our Website:**  
**www.b2bprogram.**



ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES

## MEET THE B2B TEAM!



Angela Wallace  
 B2B Interviewer

Angela Wallace is one of our treasured Interviewers whom many participants have met and already know her sunny and warm disposition. Angela has been with the B2B Study since it began 6 years ago and we are happy to provide you with a little more in depth information about her and her connection to cancer and cancer research.

*"I feel incredibly lucky to have worked as interviewer for the B2B program for the past 6 years. I feel honoured to share this newsletter with Dorothy, who was the first woman I interviewed. It's very fulfilling to see the first participants that I interviewed pass the 6 year finish line with our study. The women I've met have taught me to have joy*

*in uncertain times and to have hope in the future. Our volunteers have also shown me that their fight with cancer has made them even stronger women; they have also shared parenting wisdom, life lessons, and even a recipe or two while they so graciously opened their homes to me.*

*I tell everyone that will listen that I have the best job in the world, aside from being mom to my two beautiful girls. When I'm not working, I love yoga, running and urban hikes. I am also passionate about Christmas, and with Margo Hopkins, run a charity called "The Giving Tree YYC". We give trees to women and children who have fled domestic violence and live in shel-*

*ters. I am also a new recruit to Alberta Health Services "No One Dies Alone" volunteer program".*

## PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

"I was diagnosed with a very aggressive Breast Cancer in 2010 and joined this B2B Study as a way of "giving back" to Alberta Health Services for their management of my disease. At the initial onset of this study, I distinctly remember thinking to myself as I filled out all that paperwork, "I wonder if I will still be on this Earth in six years' time."

In 2012 I was diagnosed as a carrier of the BRCA 1 Gene and consequently had further surgery to remove all my other "female bits." Thankfully, nothing sinister was going on and I am grateful to be able to live a normal life again! So, here I am, filling out the final pages of this B2B Study, six years on from that challenging time in my life and ever grateful for the work and research executed by Nigel Brockton and his team.

With Thanks, Pam C.

## BREAST CANCER RESOURCES

### WEBSITES

Alberta Prevents Cancer [www.albertapreventscancer.ca](http://www.albertapreventscancer.ca)

Cancer Epidemiology And Prevention Research [www.epi-research.org](http://www.epi-research.org)

Canadian Cancer Society [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)



B2B Research Program contact in-

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Visit us at: [www.B2BProgram.com](http://www.B2BProgram.com)

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