

A Collaborative Effort to Drive Awareness, Research & Early Detection in the Fight Against Breast Cancer in Young Women

BCYW Foundation: A Collective Global Effort to Tackle Young Women's Breast Cancer

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, December 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The fight against breast cancer in young women has reached a critical juncture, as rising cases underscore the need for focused academic, clinical, and social action. In response to this growing challenge, the [Breast Cancer in Young Women Foundation \(BCYW Foundation\)](#) has intensified its efforts through innovative initiatives, partnerships, and expert-driven strategies.



Opening Session: Mr. Rui Diniz, Professor Luis Costa, Professor Rakesh Kumar, and Professor Ellen Warner (left to right).

With a global network spanning 27 countries, the BCYW Foundation is working toward a future where young women are no longer overlooked or underserved in the fight against breast cancer. This mission was central to the recently concluded BCYW Foundation International Conference on Young Women's Breast Cancer and Health, held in Lisbon, Portugal.

Mr. Rui Diniz, President and CEO of CUF Portugal and the conference's Host and Co-Chair, along with Dr. Luis Costa and Dr. Rakesh Kumar, emphasized the urgent need for focused efforts. "This conference aligns closely with our mission to lead in oncology, with a specific focus on breast cancer in young women, a growing concern requiring immediate academic and clinical attention," he said. Beyond the professional discussions, Mr. Diniz highlighted CUF's commitment to community outreach, particularly its predominantly female workforce, 80% aged 25-40. CUF engaged 6,000 employees in educational initiatives to foster awareness and distributed 20,000 awareness kits to employees at four major employers in Portugal.

GLOBAL COLLABORATION: A COLLECTIVE EFFORT TO TACKLE THE ISSUE

“Addressing the rise of breast cancer in young women requires a global collaborative effort,” said Dr. Luis Costa, M.D., Ph.D. (Professor at the Unidade Local de Saúde de Santa Maria, Lisbon and Director of the BCYW Foundation). The conference exemplified this spirit of collaboration by bringing together experts, survivors, and advocates.

The BCYW Foundation’s work continues to be driven by the haunting question of a patient: “Why did this happen to me?” This question remains at the heart of its mission to advance research, improve care, and empower young women globally. “Time and again, we have encountered young women struggling with this disease—women without family histories of cancer, women who do not fit the typical risk profiles,” said Rakesh Kumar, Ph.D., Founder and CEO of the BCYW Foundation and International Endowed Chair Professor, Cancer Research Institute, SRHU, India).

With this press release, the BCYW Foundation starts session-specific highlights from the recently concluded International Conference on Young Women's Breast Cancer and Health, bringing critical discussions and insights that will likely shape future efforts in the fight against breast cancer in young women.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS: FROM TARGETED RESEARCH TO ADVOCACY
The Biological Basis of Early-Onset Breast Cancer

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Ph.D., highlighted the importance of understanding the underlying biological

Why Are More Young Women Getting Breast Cancer?

- Rise in young women's population
- Better social awareness – largely not accurate globally
- Better diagnostic tools

Don't explain the biological basis & causative triggers

Those who might be diagnosed in 2040 are expected to be around 17-18 yr in 2024

BCYW <39 2020 2024 2040

Mean Age World 33.62 Yr

Reinforcing - Modifiable Preventable Measures Power of Awareness in Early Detection

A Window to Mitigate the BCYW Risk Targeted Youth Awareness Programs

Sugar + Protein = AGEs

Lipids DNA

Sensitivity and Density (proportion of FG tissue to Fat) YW are more likely to be dense

Dr. Rakesh Kumar and Dr. Victor Findley spoke on “Why are more young women getting breast cancer?” and “Ultra-processed foods during puberty and breast cancer risk in young women.”

Dr. Samantha Heller and Dr. Carlos Santiago spoke on “Imaging young women with breast cancer: challenges and opportunities” and “Role of AI in early breast cancer detection.”

mechanisms of breast cancer in young women. He explained that early-onset breast cancer often results from complex interactions among genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors rather than a single cause over some time before the clinical manifestation of the disease. Researchers can improve early detection and prevention strategies by identifying protective and predictive biomarkers.

Diet and Breast Cancer: The Role of AGEs

Dr. Victoria Findlay, Ph.D., from Virginia Commonwealth University, explored the link between processed foods and breast cancer risk in young women. She focused on advanced glycation end-products (AGEs), harmful molecules in high-protein, high-sugar diets. Dr. Findlay's research highlights how dietary changes can mitigate risks and improve long-term health outcomes.

Radiology and AI in Breast Cancer Detection

Dr. Samantha Heller, Ph.D., M.D., from NYU School of Medicine, emphasized the role of advanced imaging and artificial intelligence (AI) in early detection, especially for young women with dense breast tissue. AI advancements have improved diagnostic accuracy, reduced false positives and negatives, and streamlined workflows, offering hope for more personalized and effective screening protocols.

Dr. Carl Santiago, Ph.D., from the Institute for Systems and Robotics in Lisbon, highlighted how artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming breast cancer diagnosis. AI has reduced false positives by 10% and false negatives by 40%, cutting radiologists' exam analysis time from 11 to 3 minutes. Rather than replacing radiologists, AI enhances their capabilities, improving diagnostic accuracy, reducing unnecessary biopsies, and streamlining workflows for faster, more precise patient care.

Unique Challenges, Advocacy, and Awareness for Young Women

Dr. Ellen Warner, M.D., from the Odette Cancer Centre in Toronto, reflected on the evolving

Diagnostic Delays

- young women with a delayed diagnosis experience adverse outcomes including distress and lower chance of survival;
- delays can also lead to a lack of confidence in their health care provider and system;
- delayed diagnosis is due to patient or physician inaction.

Awareness

Health Promotion Strategies

- communication initiatives to reach young women e.g., high school PH&Ed curriculum (Can, UK);
- tailored approaches to raise awareness and educate AYA e.g., Team Shan breast cancer campaigns and health education targeting young women (Can);
- effective social media approaches (Can).

**BREAST CANCER AWARENESS
BREAST SELF-CHECKS & CARE
PREVENTIVE SCREENING
ADVANCED RESEARCH
EARLY DETECTION**

**TODAY
SAVING LIVES TOMORROW**

AWARENESS, ADVANCED RESEARCH, and ADVOCACY

Breast Cancer in Young Women Foundation

DONATE Every contribution – big or small – helps the BCYW Foundation fulfill its mission. Thank you for your generosity.

<https://breastcancerinyoungwomen.org/donate-save-young-lives-from-cancer/>

Lorna Larsen spoke on “Breast cancer in young women: awareness, early detection, preventing diagnostic delays.”

The core message of the BCYW Foundation and support the mission.

understanding of breast cancer in young women. She acknowledged the unique hurdles this group faces, including aggressive tumor subtypes, fertility preservation, and early menopause. Dr. Warner stressed the need for tailored care plans that address these challenges comprehensively.

Lorna Larsen, an oncology nurse turned advocate and the founder of the national charity Team Shan in Canada, shared her work raising awareness and the importance of self-checks through campaigns like "Young Women Get Breast Cancer Too." Lorna emphasized the unique challenges faced by young women, including delayed diagnoses, more aggressive cancer subtypes, and gaps in healthcare support.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Lisbon conference was more than just a gathering; it was a tribute to the resilience of young women affected by breast cancer and a symbol of hope for those still battling the disease. With new insights, partnerships, and a collective commitment, the BCYW Foundation is determined to make a lasting impact in the fight against breast cancer in young women.

About the BCYW Foundation

The Breast Cancer in Young Women Foundation (BCYW Foundation) is a global organization dedicated to advancing research, raising awareness, and providing support to young women affected by breast cancer. Through partnerships and advocacy, the foundation is committed to creating a future where no young woman feels overlooked in her fight against this disease.

[Make A Donation](#)

Every contribution – big or small – helps the BCYW Foundation fulfill its mission to save the lives of young women from breast cancer in the years to come. Thank you for your generosity.

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