Breast cancer can be categorised into three types based on the presence of abnormal amounts of specific receptors (proteins) on the surface of cancer cells.

- **Hormone receptor (HR)-positive**: Too many oestrogen receptors (ER) and/or progesterone receptors (PR)
- **Human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-positive**: Too many HER2 receptors
- **Triple negative breast cancer (TNBC)**: No abnormal amounts of ER, PR or HER2 receptors

**From diagnosis to treatment:**

- **Diagnosis**
  - It is important to identify the type and stage of breast cancer. This will determine treatment decisions and prognosis.

- **Symptoms**
  - aBC symptoms may vary depending on where the cancer has spread to. Some symptoms commonly associated with aBC may include:
    - Severe, progressive bone pains
    - Abdominal pain and loss of appetite

- **Stage**
  - Prognosis becomes worse as breast cancer advances (spreads). It is important to diagnose and treat early!

- **Type**
  - Various tumor types have different biological behaviours and prognoses; e.g. HER2-positive breast cancer is aggressive. If left untreated, it is associated with poorer chances of survival and faster disease worsening than other types of breast cancer.

- **First treatment in aBC**
  - Known as ‘first-line treatment’

- **When initial treatment stops working and the cancer gets worse**
  - Patients are given a new treatment regimen (‘second-line treatment’)

- **Patients may receive further lines of treatment as their cancer worsens**

**BREAST CANCER TREATMENT**

**Goal: to cure**

- **Surgery**
  - Main eBC treatment
  - Possible procedures:
    - Lumpectomy – only lump removed
    - Quadrantectomy – ~1/4 of breast removed
    - Mastectomy – whole breast removed

- **Chemotherapy**
  - Potentially kills remaining cancer cells
  - Reduces chances of cancer returning

- **Radiotherapy**
  - Shrinks tumours
  - Makes it easier or possible to operate
  - May allow for breast conserving surgery

- **Hormonal therapy**
  - Targeted treatments can be given, especially if the breast cancer is hormone receptor-positive

**TREATMENT DECISIONS ARE BASED ON:**

- Disease and patient characteristics
- Prior treatment history
- Patient and physician’s preference

**DIAGNOSIS**

- Signs include:
  - A lump or swelling in the breast or armpit
  - Changes to size, shape or skin texture of the breast
  - Changes to the nipple, e.g. retraction, rash or discharge

- Symptoms vary depending on where the cancer has spread to.

**STAGES**

- Stage
  - Prognosis becomes worse as breast cancer advances (spreads). It is important to diagnose and treat early!

- Type
  - Various tumor types have different biological behaviours and prognoses; e.g. HER2-positive breast cancer is aggressive. If left untreated, it is associated with poorer chances of survival and faster disease worsening than other types of breast cancer.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY THE TYPE AND STAGE OF BREAST CANCER. THIS WILL DETERMINE TREATMENT DECISIONS AND PROGNOSIS.**