

Eric P. Winer, M.D.
2018 Susan G. Komen®
Brinker Award for Scientific Distinction in Clinical Research



Eric P. Winer, M.D., is being honored for his seminal contributions in improving the treatment of breast cancer, which have helped to shape the standard of care for breast cancer patients globally. Dr. Winer has devoted his career to applying the advances from clinical trials to daily practice to improve survival and quality of life for individuals with breast cancer. His accomplishments in breast cancer research and in the clinic have impacted treatment for all stages and all the major biologic subtypes of the disease and led to lasting impact on patient outcomes.

Dr. Winer has designed and conducted a wide array of clinical trials that have changed clinical practice or paved the way towards more personalized treatment of breast cancer. His career has focused on optimizing the treatment of breast cancer for specific patient populations. His clinical research has included multimodality studies to determine optimal drug doses and treatment durations, the best treatment sequence and the most effective drug combinations to treat early, locally advanced and metastatic breast cancers.

His attention has always been directed to the aspects of the disease that remain challenging, such as advanced breast cancer or metastatic breast cancer that accounts for virtually all the estimated 41,000 lives lost to breast cancer in the U.S. every year. He and his team have conducted a range of studies to improve the treatment of metastatic breast cancer. In the laboratory, they have developed new models derived from patients' tumor tissues to test novel drug combinations. In the clinic, they have developed and directed clinical trials to assess different targeted combinations of drugs, such as atezolizumab, pertuzumab and trastuzumab. Additionally, the team continues its efforts on the EMBRACE (Ending Metastatic Breast Cancer for Everyone) trial, collecting information obtaining and consent to study existing tumor tissues from metastatic breast cancer patients.

Dr. Winer is recognized as a thought leader in oncology and has a remarkable ability to synthesize results of multiple clinical trials and apply these advances in daily clinical practice. Throughout his career, he has continuously focused on improving the clinical care and quality of life of women with breast cancer and pushed the breast cancer community to consider new data-driven approaches to treatment. He has championed the concept of "more is not necessarily better" when it comes to breast cancer treatments, reminding oncologists that both the benefits *and* risks of treatments must be assessed when considering treatment options. Some of his more recent work has demonstrated the benefits of treatment de-escalation – the approach of identifying patients who will do as well with less or no treatment. For example, at the time when trastuzumab had been shown to decrease the risk of recurrence in studies mostly involving patients with stage II or stage III breast cancers, his research showed that trastuzumab paired with paclitaxel alone could be used efficiently in patients with early-stage HER2-positive breast cancer. This new approach was far less toxic and kept the risk of breast cancer recurrence very low, leading to the treatment becoming standard of care for stage I breast cancer around the world over the past few years.

Dr. Winer is a strong advocate for and leader of research collaborations. From 2003 through 2016, he held the position of co-chair of the Breast Committee for the Alliance for Clinical Trials (formerly CALGB). Since 2016, he has served as the co-chair of the NCI Breast Cancer Steering Committee that oversees the breast cancer clinical trials sponsored by the NCI. Dr. Winer has been on the Steering Committee of the Translational Breast Cancer Research Consortium. This organization represents collaboration across 18 major breast cancer programs that are focused on the conduct of early phase clinical trials with translational endpoints. He is also a respected mentor of over 30 fellows and junior faculty, many of whom have gone on to assume positions in major cancer academic cancer centers.

Dr. Winer earned his M.D. from Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, CT in 1983. He continued his clinical training in internal medicine at Yale, and in 1990, completed a fellowship in Hematology/Oncology at Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, NC. He remained on the Duke faculty until 1997, when he took a position at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston as Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Breast Oncology Center. Dr. Winer is currently the Director, Breast Oncology Program, Senior VP for Medical Affairs, Chief Clinical Strategy Officer, Thompson Chair in Breast Cancer Research, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. He also leads the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Breast SPORE.

Driven by his patients, Dr. Winer brings a passion to his work that is unsurpassed. He is committed to his patients as well as to teaching and training the next generation of breast cancer oncologists and clinical researchers. He challenges the status quo – advocating that more treatment is not necessarily better for many patients – and uses clinical evidence to advance clinical practice and empower women to make important decisions with their doctors about their breast cancer treatment. His leadership, innovation and collaborative efforts in clinical research have advanced breast cancer treatment and improved the lives of countless women with breast cancer. His work will continue to have a profound impact on the way that breast cancer is treated for years to come.