



## DCIS: Identifying & Addressing Patient Need

Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), is often closely associated or even confused with an invasive breast cancer.

DCIS is characteristically a non-invasive form of breast cancer, but for those diagnosed it is important to understand that you may be at risk of developing an invasive cancer.

A diagnosis of DCIS can raise many questions – not the least of them is - 'how are we going to treat this'? The patient and physician need to work closely together to gather as much information as possible to determine the appropriate treatment path that fits the individual's very specific needs.

According to Dr. Eileen Rakovitch of the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, "I think when we give patients information and explain it clearly, we empower them. We're moving away from the era where doctors simply tell them what to do... patients are much more engaged."

MJ DeCoteau, executive Director of Rethink Breast Cancer is a major proponent for increased patient choice & education: "You know you best; you know your own body. It's really important that you're active in the conversation with your doctor."

Though the forms of treatment for DCIS vary greatly, it can often be a difficult decision for patients. Dr. Rakovitch adds, "There are patient preferences. People have personal preferences about what treatments they will accept; how much risk they will accept or won't accept."

After a diagnosis, there are tools available to help evaluate the risk of DCIS returning as a more aggressive, invasive cancer. Amongst other tools, determining a genomic score can assess the individual's personal risk going forward, and therefore advise which treatments may be necessary and which may not be appropriate, or are unnecessary.

By Dr. Rakovitch's evaluation: "Any test that moves us forward to more accurately identifying risk and engaging women in a more precise conversation about risk and benefit of treatment is very satisfying."

with



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For more information on the DCIS score – how it works and what it can tell you about your risk for recurrence, visit the link below.

[www.HealthandFamily.ca/DCIS](http://www.HealthandFamily.ca/DCIS)

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