

ASCO insights: Bria-IMT + checkpoint inhibitor trials in metastatic breast cancer



Carmen Calfa
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Carmen Calfa MD is Associate Director of Community Outreach and Medical Co-Director of the Survivorship Cancer Program at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. She also serves as the Clinical Research Lead for the Breast Site Disease Group and Physician Leader of the Genetic Predisposition Syndrome Initiative at Sylvester and leads Sylvester's Multidisciplinary Survivorship Clinic Program, playing a key role in the Adolescent and Young Adult Steering Committee.

Dr Calfa dedicates her efforts to increasing cancer survival through access to innovative research and improving the quality of life for survivors and their caregivers. She is the recipient of the Zubrod 2020 Outstanding Clinical Researcher of the Year Award and the 2020 Miami Dolphins Everyday Hero Award.

She is the institutional principal investigator for several clinical trials and leads the Precision Medicine Clinical Trials Initiative at Sylvester.

We recently caught up with Carmen Calfa to discuss her poster presentation at ASCO 2025, which highlighted survival results for Bria-IMT + checkpoint inhibitors for metastatic breast cancer (MBC) patients.

In this interview, Calfa shares key takeaways from her research, discusses the impact of HLA matching on clinical outcomes' and offers valuable advice for breast cancer oncologists attending the ASCO Annual Meeting for the first time.

1 What are the key takeaways from your ASCO poster presentation on Bria-IMT + checkpoint inhibitor for MBC?

The Bria-IMT regimen, which is a combination immunotherapy consisting of allogeneic whole cell cancer vaccine (SV-BR-1-GM), combined with an immune checkpoint inhibitor continues to demonstrate a favorable tolerability profile and evidence of clinical benefit in heavily pretreated patients with MBC. The ongoing Phase III trial (NCT06072612) is enrolling patients in ER/PR+/HER2-, TNBC, as well as in HER+ MBC subgroups. We are happy to offer it at our Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of Miami Uhealth.

I am hopeful that this regimen will become a therapeutic approved option for patients with advanced breast cancer.



2

Can you elaborate on how the Phase I/II findings for this combination therapy compare with outcomes from benchmark trials in MBC?

Patients receiving the Bria-IMT Phase III investigational product (IP) formulation demonstrated overall survival (OS) of 10.4 months in TNBC and 17.3 months in HR+HER2 negative breast cancer patients, comparable to, arguably less heavily pretreated advanced breast cancer patients, in the ASCENT study and TROPiCS-02 trials respectively.

The randomized Phase III BRiA-ABC trial is designed to answer this question prospectively and we are looking forward to seeing the results.

3

What impact did HLA matching have on clinical outcomes for Bria-IMT plus anti-PD1 in advanced breast cancer?

All patients with regressions had human leukocyte antigen (HLA) matches with SV-BR-1-GM; non-responders were equally divided between matching and nonmatching and having ≥ 2 HLA matches with SV-BR-1-GM correlated with clinical benefit. These findings are under further investigation in our ongoing analysis and trials.

4

What talks are you most looking forward to attending at this year's ASCO?

I'm looking forward to seeing the results of several antibody drug conjugate Phase III trials that are likely to change current practice in across all subtypes of breast cancers, from early stage to locally advanced and metastatic disease. Escalation and de-escalation therapy are equally important, and I look forward to identifying new strategies to allow most personalized approaches to cancer care.

5

What advice would you give to a breast cancer oncologist attending ASCO for the first time?

I would advise those attending the ASCO Annual Meeting for the first time to identify ahead of time the sessions they want to see in person and mark those that can be watched later. Prioritize meeting those people want to meet in real life – networking is a key part of the ASCO experience.

And lastly, be confident. If you feel overwhelmed, that's ok – take it as a good feeling and that you're learning. Nothing in medicine matches the rapidly evolving field of oncology, especially breast oncology!

Disclaimer

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