

How to Qualify for Social Security Disability With Breast Cancer

A cancer diagnosis can be incredibly scary. Even if cancer is caught early and is very treatable, the treatment process can be very time-consuming and lead to severe side effects that leave you unable to work. If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer, you might be able to be approved for disability benefits from the Social Security Administration ([SSA](#)). The SSA oversees two disability programs, Social Security Disability Insurance ([SSDI](#)) which is based on work history, and Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)) which is needs based.

Both programs have strict medical criteria that must be met to prove that you are unable to work. To get Social Security Disability benefits, you must show that you will be unable to work for at least a year or you have a condition that is expected to result in your death. The [American Cancer Society](#) estimates that in the United States for 2019, there are 2,670 new cases of invasive breast cancer diagnosed in men and about 500 men will die from breast cancer.

Medically Qualifying for Social Security Disability with Breast Cancer

The [Blue Book](#) is the medical guide used by the SSA to determine if a claimant's condition is severe enough to warrant disability benefits. [Listing 13.10](#) is the listing for breast cancer. If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer and your condition meets one of these criteria, you will qualify for disability benefits:

- Small-cell (oat cell) carcinoma
- A carcinoma that is locally advanced that has extended or spread to the internal mammary nodes, skin, or chest
- A carcinoma that has spread beyond the collarbone and/or the distant chest regions or has extended into at least 10 nodes in the armpits
- A carcinoma that is recurrent after anti-cancer treatment or therapy

Usually, to qualify for disability benefits per the Blue Book listing, your breast cancer must be at Stage III or Stage IV. [Supporting documentation](#) is essential to the success of your claim. You will need to confirm the diagnosis and show your limitations and restrictions caused by the condition. Here are some examples of documents that can help you with your disability claim for breast cancer:

- Pathology reports for any biopsies
- Mammograms and test reports to show the spread of the cancer and its severity
- Medical records for any anti-cancer treatments, the side effects of those treatments, and the response your cancer had to those treatments
- Surgical notes for any procedures that you have done for your breast cancer

Breast Cancer and the Compassionate Allowance Program

Sometimes breast cancer might qualify for disability benefits through the [Compassionate Allowances Program](#) (CAP). This program allows applicants with specific diagnoses and certain disabilities to be approved for disability benefits much more quickly. You will qualify for the CAP if your cancer has spread to other body parts or if you have breast cancer that has:

- Returned despite a round of treatment

- Cannot be removed completely
- Is inoperable

[Stage IV breast cancer](#) is a CAP condition that will lead to expedite claim processing, which will allow the claimant to start receiving disability benefits in days rather than months. If you qualify for expedited review, that will occur automatically based on the evidence in your application.

Resources:

- <https://www.ssa.gov/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/>
- <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer-in-men.html>
- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/glossary/blue-book>
- https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/13.00-NeoplasticDiseases-Malignant-Adult.htm#13_10
- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/blog/acceptable-documents>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/>
- <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lrx/0423022125>

Key Statistics for Breast Cancer in Men

The American Cancer Society estimates for breast cancer in men in the United States for 2019 are:

- About 2,670 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed
- About 500 men will die from breast cancer

Breast cancer is about 100 times less common among white men than among white women. It is about 70 times less common among black men than black women. Like black women, black men with breast cancer tend to have a worse prognosis (outlook). For men, the lifetime risk of getting breast cancer is about 1 in 833.