

## WHAT IS BIA-ALCL?

BIA-ALCL is **B**reast **I**mplant-**A**ssociated **A**naplastic **L**arge **C**ell **L**ymphoma, a T-cell lymphoma that can arise around breast implants placed for either reconstructive or cosmetic indications.<sup>1</sup> Currently, the cause of BIA-ALCL is not clearly understood.<sup>1</sup>

## IS BIA-ALCL A TYPE OF BREAST CANCER?

BIA-ALCL is **not** a cancer of the breast tissue itself, but a type of cancer that develops around the scar tissue from the implant, and in some cases, can spread throughout the body.<sup>1</sup>

## IS BIA-ALCL COMMON?

It is estimated that there are 35 million women worldwide who have breast implants.<sup>2</sup> The true incidence of BIA-ALCL is hard to estimate.<sup>3</sup> To date, the estimated incidence rates in scientific literature range from 0.03% to 0.003%, or 1 in 3,817 to 1 in 30,000.<sup>4-7\*</sup>

\* Publications referenced here include patient populations with breast implants and patients specifically with textured breast implants.

## WHAT CAUSES BIA-ALCL?

International health regulatory agencies are proactively working with implant manufacturers to study BIA-ALCL.<sup>8-12</sup> To date, no specific risk factors have been identified, however implant texture, genetics, and bacteria have been implicated and are undergoing further study.<sup>1</sup>

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF BIA-ALCL?

BIA-ALCL is most commonly reported at an average of 8–10 years following implant placement.<sup>13</sup> The first symptoms are usually a swelling of the breast—often caused by fluid building up around the implant.<sup>1</sup> Other symptoms can include pain, lumps, and unevenness between breasts.<sup>1</sup>

## IS BIA-ALCL TREATABLE?

Yes. When diagnosed early by a surgical specialist, BIA-ALCL can be treated, often successfully.<sup>1</sup> In most cases, BIA-ALCL can be treated by removing the breast implant and surrounding scar capsule, however, additional treatment may be necessary depending on the individual.<sup>1</sup> In cases where the disease has spread throughout the body, rare cases of death have been reported.<sup>1,14</sup>

## WHAT TYPES OF IMPLANTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH BIA-ALCL?

BIA-ALCL has been associated with both saline and silicone implants, round and anatomic implants, all gel types, and all projections, as well as implants for both reconstructive and cosmetic purposes.<sup>1</sup>

## WHAT ARE TEXTURED IMPLANTS AND HOW DO THEY AFFECT MY RISK OF DEVELOPING BIA-ALCL?

Breast implants have different surface textures, including smooth or textured. For cases reported to date, BIA-ALCL has been seen most often in patients with textured implants<sup>1</sup>, however the risk of developing BIA-ALCL with textured implants is low.<sup>6</sup> Although it is difficult to quantify the true incidence and prevalence of BIA-ALCL<sup>3</sup>, to date the estimated incidence rates range from 0.03% to 0.003%, or 1 in 3,817 to 1 in 30,000.<sup>4-7\*</sup>

\* Publications referenced here include patient populations with breast implants and patients specifically with textured breast implants.

## WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE TEXTURED IMPLANTS?

If you are not experiencing any problems, international health regulatory agencies (i.e., United States Food and Drug Administration [FDA], Health Canada,

United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency [MHRA], France's Agence Nationale de Sécurité du Médicament [ANSM], Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration [TGA]) do not recommend removal of the implants or any changes to your routine medical care.<sup>8-12</sup>

## WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY HEALTH?

It makes good sense to monitor your breast implants. Perform regular breast self-examinations to make sure they feel normal.<sup>8-12</sup> Consult your healthcare provider if you notice swelling, pain, lumps or asymmetry after the surgery sites are fully healed.<sup>8-12,15</sup> If you have breast implants, your surgeon will advise you on aftercare and regular follow-ups.<sup>8-12</sup>

## IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD DO IF I HAVE BREAST IMPLANTS?

**If you have breast implants, there is no need to change your routine medical care and follow-up.** You should follow standard medical recommendations, including regular medical examinations as scheduled by your doctor. If you notice any changes, contact your health care provider promptly to schedule an appointment.<sup>8-12</sup>

## WHAT IS ALLERGAN DOING ABOUT BIA-ALCL?

Patient safety is Allergan's first priority. They are working closely with leading surgeons worldwide to increase awareness of the disease and the importance of early diagnosis. Allergan will continue to work with the medical community to further the understanding of this disease.

Allergan also provides rare-events coverage, up to \$5,000 USD, for its products in cases of BIA-ALCL. Patients with Allergan implants are eligible for assistance with out-of-pocket surgical costs, not covered by insurance, including removal of the breast implant(s) and associated tissue.

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FREQUENTLY  
ASKED QUESTIONS  
ABOUT BIA-ALCL

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