

DOCTOR UNCLE SAM

QUICK STATS

- ✘ **CONFERENCE:** Spending
- ✘ **TEAM:** Department of Defense
- **FUMBLE:** \$25 million
- **HOW TO RECOVER THE BALL:** DOD's medical research should focus on injuries or illnesses directly related to defense activities

According to NCI, approximately 230,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed annually.¹⁵² The number is more than a statistic; most American families have someone who has fought breast cancer or know someone who has. It is the second-most common type of cancer in the world and the most common cancer for women. It is beyond time to find a cure and NCI and NIH should lead the way. There is certainly a national interest in funding cancer research, but the federal government should funnel those dollars to a targeted number of agencies who can continually build on their cutting-edge developments, rather than spread a finite number of dollars around a wide variety of entities.

In August 2015 DOD offered a \$25 million grant “to support promising research that has high potential to lead to or make breakthroughs in breast cancer.”¹⁵³ No preliminary data is

required, according to the grant solicitation. DOD looks for innovative, high-risk, high-reward research in the earliest stages of idea development.¹⁵⁴ When federal institutions already do the same thing, this \$25 million could either go toward much-needed defense capabilities or could be transferred to another entity already working on breast cancer research.

RECOVERY

This is a admirable goal, but not for DOD, which should instead focus on national security. Any federal dollars going toward cancer research should flow from NCI or NIH, the natural place for medical research. Congress should work with DOD to ensure any medical research it conducts is directly related to injuries or illnesses occurring in defense-related activities.

For more information, please visit:

[Grants.gov: DOD Breast Cancer Breakthrough Award Levels 1 and 2](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/list-awards.html?searchCriteria=breast+cancer&awardLevel=1&awardLevel=2)