



# M Category

## Debunking Urban Legends in Staging



# M Category Assessment

- Determined by clinician
  - Signs
  - Symptoms
  - Tests or the lack of studies
  - Treatment plan
- Must be completed for every case
- Cannot assign stage group without M category

# M Category Rules

- MX eliminated, starting in 2010 with 7<sup>th</sup> edition
- cM only requires history and physical
- Infer cM0 unless known cM1
- pM1 may be used in clinical stage groups
- cM0 and cM1 may be used in pathological stage groups

- Isolated tumor cells are cM0(i+)
  - CTCs - circulating tumor cells
  - DTCs - disseminated tumor cells
  - Considered negative for metastasis
  - Uncertain prognostic significance
  - Clinical classification, not pathological

# M Category Cautions – Reminders

- Microscopic confirmation is pathological designation, pM
- pM0 is not a valid category
- MX is not a valid category
- Clinical M may be used in pathological stage
- Pathological M may be used in clinical stage
- Valid M categories for **both** clinical and pathological staging
  - cM0
  - cM1
  - pM1

# Use of “X” Designation

- Used when information is unknown to the physician
- TX and NX usually preclude stage assignment
  - May be appropriate
  - Do not abuse
- Do not assign MX, eliminated as valid in 2010
  - Clinical M0 unless clinical or pathological evidence of mets