



NEWS RELEASE

Merck and Emmy-Nominated Actress Yvonne Orji Unveil Uncovering TNBC, Highlighting the Challenges Faced by Black Women Diagnosed with Triple-Negative Breast Cancer

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First-of-its-Kind Docuseries Uncovers Patients' 'Stories of Resilience'

KENILWORTH, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, in collaboration with the breast cancer advocacy community and Emmy-nominated actress, Yvonne Orji, launched a new initiative, **Uncovering TNBC**, to shed light on the unique challenges Black women face when diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC). Non-Hispanic Black women are approximately two times more likely to have TNBC than non-Hispanic white women, and compared to white women, Black women are more likely to die of the disease. Join Yvonne as she speaks with Sharon, Tiah and Damesha, three women diagnosed with TNBC, who share their stories of triumphs while also discussing the health disparities Black women can face. Through the web docuseries and educational materials, Uncovering TNBC aims to inform Black women and empower them to advocate for themselves with their health care team.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20211005005206/en/>

Emmy-nominated actress, Yvonne Orji. (Photo: Business Wire)

With a master's degree in public health and a nurse for a mother, Yvonne has been passionate about closing the health care equity gap since before she became a TV star.

"I know firsthand how important it is for Black women to take charge of their health and advocate for themselves. Data shows women in our community have a higher chance of developing TNBC, but we can take steps to help protect ourselves and our families," said Yvonne. "I hope these stories uplift women with TNBC and inspire them to get the care they need."

The centerpiece of the Uncovering TNBC campaign is a three-episode web docuseries that highlights the challenges Black women with TNBC can face throughout their cancer journeys. Hosted by Yvonne, the docuseries spotlights three brave warriors and their experiences with TNBC: Damesha from North Carolina, Sharon from Virginia and Tiah from Georgia. The series aims to amplify the stories of Black women with TNBC and offers resources that will help others understand their risks and advocate for themselves. The initiative also includes a webpage of educational information for women who have a higher chance of developing or are newly diagnosed with TNBC and their loved ones.

"There is no shortage of breast cancer resources, yet so few are developed with the unique needs of Black women in mind," said Maimah Karmo, founder and CEO, Tigerlily Foundation. "As a native of Liberia myself, I am proud to collaborate with Merck and Ms. Orji to support the tireless efforts to meet that need and further bridge the gap to care."

"We're honored to collaborate with advocacy organizations who have been at the forefront of fighting for health equity in the breast cancer community on this important campaign," said Jill DeSimone, president, U.S. Oncology, Merck. "For Black women with TNBC, optimal care is about more than just treating cancer: It's about being understood and supported. Uncovering TNBC is an important program that is part of our broader efforts at Merck to help advance health equity for all people with cancer."

About Uncovering TNBC

In collaboration with Susan G. Komen, Living Beyond Breast Cancer, Tigerlily Foundation, and Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation, Uncovering TNBC was developed specifically for Black women, who have a higher chance of developing or are newly diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC). TNBC accounts for about 10-15% of all breast cancers and is an aggressive type of cancer that is often difficult to treat. Black women who have a higher chance of developing or are newly diagnosed with TNBC can face unique disparities, including inadequate breast cancer screening, lack of access to treatment and less access to preventive and educational information.

Uncovering TNBC offers strategies to help address the barriers Black women can face in their journey. Through culturally relevant, educational and solution-oriented content, the program aims to support patients from diagnosis to survivorship. Information and resources can be found on **UncoverTNBC.com**.

About Yvonne Orji

Yvonne Orji is a Nigerian-American Emmy-nominated actress, comedian and writer who continues to display her versatility and passion with each project she takes on. In addition to her starring role in the critically acclaimed HBO comedy series, *Insecure*, she is a distinguished stand-up comedian, feature film star, podcast host and published author.

Outside of her creative work, Yvonne is dedicated to her charitable efforts. In 2008, she spent six months working in post-conflict Liberia with Population Services International (PSI), a non-governmental organization (NGO) that uses social marketing to promote health behaviors. While in Liberia, she worked with a group of talented youth to help build a mentoring program and a weekly talk show that helped educate and prevent teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

Yvonne has brought her work with the youth community back to the States, where she is now involved with (RED) campaigns and faith-based youth ministries.

About Merck

For over 130 years, Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals – including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases – as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **YouTube** and **LinkedIn**.

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This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the “company”) includes “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of the global outbreak of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19); the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care

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The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2020 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

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