Abstract
Breast cancer is an etiologically heterogeneous disease with marked geographical variations. Joint consideration of the relationship between specific molecular alterations and known or suspected epidemiologic risk factors for this disease should help distinguish subgroups of women that are at elevated risk of developing breast cancer. In this article, we present a comprehensive literature review of the etiologic and prognostic roles of Her-2/neu and P53 among women. In addition, we discuss the advantages and limitations of using biomarkers in epidemiological studies. We conclude that more research is needed to understand the complex relationships between genetic alterations and etiologic risk factors for breast cancer.

Keywords
breast neoplasms; genes; risk factors; biological markers; racial stocks.