Mary Beth Terry, PhD, is a Professor of Epidemiology at Columbia University and focuses her research on breast cancer and in the molecular epidemiology and life-course methods of the disease, in particular. She is a cancer epidemiologist with over 14 years of leading studies of breast cancer etiology specifically focused on the role of genetics, epigenetics, and other biomarkers play in modifying the effects of environmental exposures.

Dr. Terry currently leads four NIH grants through the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences that focus on following cancer risk within family-based cohorts. She is also funded through the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Her more recent work studying biomarkers, which can be modified throughout life, supports that selected markers of DNA methylation and other biomarkers are associated with breast cancer risk even within high risk families. Understanding whether biomarkers can help explain risk in higher risk women is important as only a minority of women with a family history of cancer carry the BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation.

Her work also focuses on measuring risk factors for mammographic density, a strong intermediate marker of breast cancer. In addition to her doctorate in epidemiology, Dr. Terry has a Master's degree in economics and previously worked as an econometrician and program evaluator for a number of government-sponsored programs.