

Roche sales up 3 percent amid demand for breast cancer drugs

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Breast cancer drugs such as Herceptin as well as new uses for multi-cancer drug Avastin helped Swiss pharmaceutical firm Roche grow sales by 3 percent during the first quarter.

Group sales rose 3 percent to 11.83 billion Swiss francs (\$12.30 billion). Sales rose 5 percent if the sudden rise in the Swiss franc during the quarter is disregarded.

CEO Severin Schwan said Wednesday that "we started the year with strong growth and good uptake of [new products](#)."

The company's drugs for certain aggressive forms of [breast cancer](#) saw "very strong" growth of 23 percent as more doctors combined using Herceptin and Perjeta.

Avastin sales were up 6 percent after recent approvals for it to be used against additional forms of cancer.

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