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Surgical margins in breast conserving treatment for invasive and DCIS tumors

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Introduction: Although breast conserving treatment (BCT) has been standard practice for more than 20 years, there was no consensus on what constitutes an optimal negative margin width, until the last 2 years.

Objective: To review the Consensus Guidelines on Margins for BCT with whole-breast irradiation in DCIS and in Stages I and II invasive breast cancer.

Material & Methods: A multidisciplinary consensus panel used a meta-analysis of margin width and ipsilateral breast tumor recurrence (IBTR) from a systematic review of 33 studies including 28,162 patients for invasive breast cancer and a review of 20 studies including 7,883 patients for DCIS.

Results: Positive margins (ink on invasive carcinoma or ductal carcinoma in situ) are associated with a 2-fold increase in the risk of IBTR compared with negative margins. For invasive breast cancer, negative margins (no ink on tumor) optimize IBTR. Wider margins widths do not significantly lower this risk. The routine practice to obtain wider negative margin widths than ink on tumor is not indicated. For DCIS, a 2-mm margin minimizes the risk of IBTR compared with smaller negative margins. More widely clear margins do not significantly decrease IBTR compared with 2-mm margins.

Conclusions: The use of no ink on tumor is the standard for an adequate margin in invasive cancer. A 2-mm margin is the standard for an adequate margin in DCIS. Clinical judgment should be used in determining the need for further surgery in DCIS patients with negative margins narrower than 2-mm. Both consensus guidelines have the potential to decrease re-excision rates, improve cosmetic outcomes, and decrease health care costs.

Biography

Mauricio Camus A is a Breast Surgeon, Associate Professor, and Chief of the Department of Surgical Oncology, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. He is the President of Chilean Society of Mastology during 2014-2016; President of Federation of Cancerology Societies of South America (2012-2014); Vice-president Chilean Society of Surgeons (2010-2012); President Chilean Society of Cancerology (2008-2010). He is an active member of the Board of the Senologic International Society and President of the Scientific Committee of the Latin American Federation of Mastology. He has published 18 papers in reputed international journals and 35 papers in Chilean journals. He has been serving as an Editorial Board Member of 2 reputed journals.

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