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Breast cancer in male-to-female (MtF) transgender patients: Is hormone receptor negativity a feature?

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Introduction: The incidence of male breast cancer is less than 1%. The incidence, however, in male-to-female (MtF) transgender is unknown. We present a case of an MtF transgender patient diagnosed with a triple-negative invasive ductal carcinoma following long-term estrogen therapy. This is a contribution to the growing literature questioning the role of long-term estrogen therapy as a risk factor for hormone receptor-negative breast cancer in MtF transgender patients.

Methods: Case report and literature reviews were studied. We performed searches in Medline and Embase.

Results: Fifteen cases were reported so far in the literature. Ductal carcinoma is the most common histological type. MtF transgender patients have a relatively earlier onset of disease and are more commonly hormone receptor negative compared to male breast cancer. There were variations in management with respect to discontinuation of hormonal therapy following diagnoses.

Conclusion: We report this case to highlight the frequent occurrence of hormone receptor negative breast cancer in the few reported cases in MtF transgender patients and the implications in practice. In view of the increasing number of patients undergoing transgender surgery, patients need to be fully aware of the risk of malignant breast disease, however small. There might even be an argument to enrol these patients in suitable screening programmes.

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