Quality of Life Following Breast Conservation Therapy versus Mastectomy with Reconstruction in Women with Primary Breast Cancer

Andrew Adams, MD

Multiple randomized trials have demonstrated equivalent mortality between breast conserving therapy and mastectomy. This has led to the recommendation that breast conserving therapy be adopted as the standard of care for eligible women diagnosed with stage 1 or 2 breast cancer. However there are a paucity of data on quality of life outcomes comparing breast conserving surgery and mastectomy with reconstruction. Mastectomy with reconstruction has equivalent survival to breast conserving therapy and, according to some studies, has a cosmetic advantage over breast conserving therapy. Yet, it is not routinely offered as an alternative surgical option for women who are candidates. We hypothesize that women identified as high risk patients for poor outcomes after breast conservation therapy will have better cosmetic results, less dissatisfaction with their treatment and an overall better quality of life if referred for plastic and reconstructive surgery consultation preoperatively. A prospective study is being conducted in which patients from these two groups (breast conserving therapy, mastectomy with reconstruction) will have cosmetic outcome and quality of life compared over a one-year post-operative time period. Cosmetic outcome will be assessed by expert reviewers who will score post-operative photographs of the patients. Quality of life assessment will be obtained via patient-reported outcome questionnaires.