

ADVANCEMENTS IN BREAST CANCER SURGERY:

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU AND THE PATIENT?

A recent opinion article about the direction that surgical management is taking in the care of patients with breast cancer published in MJA by the president of our society, BreastSurgANZ Dr Andrew Spillane¹ is very much in line with our views at Breast & Body Clinic.

It is important to recognize that management of breast cancer is no longer the domain of one specialty but is the responsibility of several different specialties. It has been shown that with an appropriate use of a multidisciplinary approach the overall 5-year breast cancer survival rates have reached the 90% mark. This is an excellent outcome for our patients, which have come about with incremental improvements in each of the individual approaches used to treat breast cancer.

LONGER HORMONAL TREATMENT IS ON THE CARDS FOR SOME PATIENTS

The fact is that for many patients breast cancer is no longer the death sentence that it used to be but has become more akin to chronic disease and needs to be monitored for a much longer period of time. We know that particularly in patients with hormonally positive disease, recurrences occur in the first 2-3 years or 10-15 years out from their diagnosis. This is one of the reasons that investigations into an extended period of anti-hormonal therapy have been initiated, with new evidence suggesting that 10 years of tamoxifen is better than 5 years of tamoxifen in reducing risks of recurrence and improving overall survival.

The silver lining with the use of tamoxifen is in the fact that its effect lasts up to 10 years if used for 5 years and up to 15 years if used for 10, which really addresses concerns around the second high risk period in the life of a hormonally positive breast cancer patient.

ONCOPLASTIC BREAST SURGERY – THE NEW SURGICAL STANDARD OF CARE

The fact that in many cases breast cancer can be cured or converted to chronic disease, means that the issues of quality of life post treatment become that much more important. Realisation of this by patients and treating surgeons led the way in the introduction of Oncoplastic Breast Surgery (OBS) to treat breast cancer. This approach has rapidly gained acceptance and has become the standard of care in many institutions.

At Breast & Body Clinic, we focus on these approaches to improve the lives of our patients long term by not only addressing their oncological treatment, but also giving considerable thought to the best surgical approaches that can provide a good to excellent aesthetic result. This can allow them to lead a full and uninhibited life, free of

concerns about poorly placed scars that limit their wardrobe, divots and deformities in the breast that make them feel self conscious, or significant asymmetry that makes day to day life more challenging.

NEO-ADJUVANT CHEMO AND RECONSTRUCTION RATES

The fact that we are now utilising more and more neo-adjuvant chemotherapy for patients with larger tumours or locally advanced tumours, means that many of them may also reap the benefits of the OBS, allowing for more options with breast preservation procedures. And in cases where this is not possible, Breast Reconstruction (BR) is now firmly in the armamentarium of our surgeons, thus creating an environment where less and less women have to go through a period where the symbol of their femininity, their self-confidence and their sexuality is radically changed or deformed.

At our institution we have found that if necessary amount of time is spent on discussion of the options and what is actually involved in reconstruction, rates well above the national average can be achieved with many women who require a mastectomy for oncological, preventative or other reasons deciding to utilise either Immediate or Delayed reconstruction with implants or their own tissue.

It is important to return to the fact that these are complex scenarios, both from an oncologic and reconstructive point of view and require multidisciplinary input and are all discussed at our MDT, with input from medical, surgical, nursing and allied health professionals.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TREATMENT IS KEY TO IMPROVED RESULTS

Finally, it is interesting to note how intertwined the management of breast cancer has become. Improvements in surgical and non-surgical cancer management have led to improvements in overall survival and lower recurrence rates of breast cancer. This in turn has changed the way we see and approach breast cancer surgically and has dramatically changed how and what operations we actually do and what techniques we use as the goals of these operations have changed significantly compared to only 10-20 years ago.

The personalised nature of breast cancer management will continue to evolve and to improve outcomes, until perhaps one day no patient will die from breast cancer. And isn't that what we are all fighting for.

References:

1. What is new in the surgical management and prevention of breast cancer? AJ Spillane, MJA204 (8), 2/5/2016



BREAST AND BODY CLINIC specialises in all aspects of Breast Cancer Surgery and Breast Disease management utilising the latest technology and techniques

Working with a highly qualified team of cancer specialists, Dr Michael Yunaev as head of the practice offers a multidisciplinary approach to care and treats patients with breast cancer and benign conditions as well as addressing aesthetic issues.

Dr Michael Yunaev is an Oncoplastic Breast, General and Cosmetic Surgeon. After completing a Fellowship in General Surgery at Westmead Hospital, Dr Yunaev undertook a further two years of post fellowship training in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery. During this time, he also completed his Masters in Surgery at The University of Sydney.

Areas of interest include:

- Breast cancer surgery
- Oncoplastic breast conservation through a range of oncoplastic techniques
- Breast reconstruction (implant & own tissue)
- Revision breast surgery/lipofilling/liposuction
- Post operative breast cancer follow-up & management
- High risk patient management & prophylactic surgery
- Male breast cancer management & gynecomastia surgery
- Cosmetic breast reduction & lifting taking into account the patient's whole health outcome
- Cosmetic breast augmentation taking into account the patient's whole health outcome
- Open and Laparoscopic General Surgery

Dr Yunaev is a Consultant Breast Surgeon at BreastScreen NSW and Breast and Body Clinic and provides consulting and surgical services at St Luke's Private Hospital, Norwest Private Hospital and St Jude Street Specialist Centre.



Dr Michael Yunaev

Oncoplastic Breast, General and Cosmetic Surgeon
MBBS, FRACS, MS (Breast Surgery)
BMedSci (Hons), MPH

St Luke's Clinic Hemsley House

20 Roslyn Street
Potts Point NSW 2011

Norwest Specialty Services

Suite 111, 9 Norbrik Drive,
Bella Vista NSW 2153

St Jude Street Specialist Centre

21 St Jude street
Bowral NSW 2576

e info@bbclinic.com.au

w bbclinic.com.au

p (02) 9819 7449

f (02) 9356 0460

To arrange an appointment please contact: **p: (02) 9819 7449 f: (02) 9356 0460**