

The impact of local recurrence on the survival of operable breast cancer patients treated conservatively

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The impact of local recurrence on survival was studied on 259 patients with operable breast cancer treated at the Institute of Oncology in Ljubljana in the years 1978-1988. This was a retrospective, non randomized study. All patients had breast conserving surgery (219 patients had quadrantectomy or wide excision, 40 patients had tumorectomy only).

After surgery, 129 patients received postoperative irradiation (50Gy to the breast and mostly 10Gy boost to the tumor bed), and 130 patients had no irradiation.

The objective of the study was to evaluate the difference in the recurrence rate in both groups and the impact of recurrence on survival.

From 130 patients with no irradiation after surgery 41 developed recurrences in contrast to only 16 local recurrences in 129 patients who were irradiated postoperatively ($p = 0.00017$). Local recurrences were more frequent after tumorectomy in comparison to quadrantectomy or wide excision (35% vs. 20%, $p = 0.02$).

The survival in the group of patients with local recurrence and in the group of patients without local recurrence did not differ in the first 5 years after surgery, whereas the difference in the survival of the both groups became highly significant thereafter ($p = 0.0076$) (Figure 1)

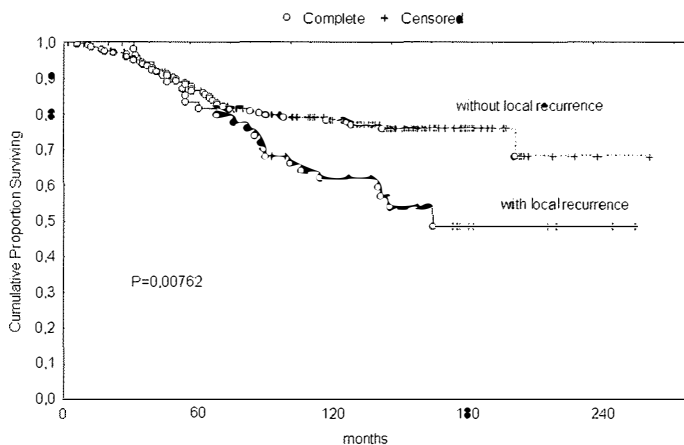


Figure 1: Survival with local recurrence (68 patients with local recurrence and 190 patients without local recurrence).

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