

2nd World Congress on **Breast Cancer**

September 19-21, 2016 Phoenix, USA

The Role of specimen imaging as a reliable tool to assess the margin status following surgery for breast cancer

Mandeep Kaur, Chintamani, Deepak Diwakar, Niranjana Kumar, Manish Kumar Mishra, Ravi Prakash, Anju Bansal and Sunita Saxena
Safdarjung Hospital, India

Background: Assessment of margins after surgery for breast cancer, and especially when breast conservation surgery (BCS) is contemplated, is an essential part of the management. Various techniques like frozen section or, imprint cytology, are in use but they have limitations viz. structural histological evaluation is not feasible. This leads to false negatives and also has limitation in that it is operator dependent. In order to obviate these shortcomings various centers are already using specimen imaging (Mammography and ultrasound).

Aims & Objectives: The aim of the study was to assess the accuracy of specimen imaging in assessing the margin status following surgery (MRM/lumpectomy) for breast cancer as compared to the frozen section.

Materials & Methods: 110 biopsy proven patients with breast cancer were evaluated in this prospective study at a tertiary cancer care center. The specimen (lumpectomy or mastectomy) was sent for specimen sonomammography and later for frozen section. The final histopathology served as the gold standard.

Results: Specimen sonomammography was observed to be superior to frozen section in providing detailed assessment of margins and multicentricity, especially in patients undergoing breast conservation. Specimen mammography could also detect additional cancers that frozen section may miss, especially the *in situ* malignancies.

sandhu.mandeep02@googlemail.com

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