

BREAST CANCER YOUR TREATMENT PLAN

BREAST CONSERVATION THERAPY

What you need to know about your treatment of Breast Cancer.

Surgery , Radiotherapy , Chemotherapy and Hormone therapy are the 4 modalities of treatment of Breast Cancer.

Every patient of breast cancer needs to be treated individually. After evaluating various factors as well as considering your own preferences, a decision to offer you **Breast Conservation Surgery** (BCT) has been taken.

This leaflet outlines the treatment of breast conservation therapy in breast cancer. We hope to alleviate your fears and help you plan your life during treatment. This especially aims at helping outstation patients plan their stay in Mumbai during the treatment.

BREAST CONSERVATION SURGERY

Involves removal of the breast lump along with the lymph glands in the armpit.

Thanks to modern radiotherapy techniques, and chemotherapy agents, if you are a suitable candidate, you can be offered breast conservation surgery.

Studies all over the world have proven that the chances of cure are the same following mastectomy alone or a combination of breast conservation surgery and radiotherapy.

Since you are offered breast conservation therapy, you will not have to live without the breast but, it is mandatory to take radiotherapy after breast conservation.

At our hospital an attempt is made to offer breast conservative therapy (BCT) to as many patients as possible.

Admission : Would be a day before surgery as per the waiting list.

Discharge : Within 1-2 days after surgery.

Post Discharge : You will need to stay in Mumbai for at least 15 days.

By the 15th day after surgery -

* Suture are removed.

* A decision on further management is taken according to the pathology report.

Radiotherapy with or without chemotherapy and hormonal therapy shall be planned as per the pathology report.

CHEMOTHERAPY :

Chemotherapy is the anti-cancer drugs administered intravenously to destroy cancer cells.

Chemotherapy after Surgery aims to kill the remaining cancer cells (If any). A maximum of 6 cycles of chemotherapy is given at 3 weekly intervals after checking your blood count at every occasion.

Kindly refer to our leaflet on chemotherapy . It will help you to understand the effects of chemotherapy and how to cope with it.

Sometimes you may be given 3 cycles of chemotherapy followed by radiotherapy. In this case you shall need to complete the remaining 3 cycles of chemotherapy after radiotherapy.

Chemotherapy is administered at Tata Memorial hospital on outpatient basis, or as a day care admission.

For outstation patients , the first cycle may be taken at Tata Memorial Hospital and the rest of the cycles may take at your native place.

A letter with proper instructions for your local doctor shall be given.

RADIOTHERAPY :

Radiotherapy or ` Light Therapy ` prevents the possibility of recurrence of cancer at the operated site with the use of special rays.

Radiotherapy is mandatory after breast conservation surgery.

Radiotherapy after breast conservation surgery involves radiating the breast that is conserved and in addition giving a boost of radiotherapy to the tumour bed.

We prefer to give radiotherapy at Tata Memorial Hospital after breast conservation.

A date for radiotherapy is given at the time of availability of the pathology report. Accordingly, out standing patients need to arrange to return for radiotherapy.

You need to stay in Mumbai for 6-8 weeks at a stretch.

Accommodation can be made available at hospital guest house at a nominal charge.

Radiotherapy is given for 5 days a week with rest on Saturday and Sunday.

According to the appointment given, you need to attend the OPD daily during this period. The procedure takes less than 30 min.

HORMONAL THERAPY :

It involves taking a drug called Tamoxifen (20 mg) daily for a period of 5 years. It has very few side effects. In postmenopausal women newer drugs called aromatase inhibitors may be prescribed.

PLANNER FOR BREAST CONSERVATION THERAPY

Decision Taken : BREAST CONSERVATION THERAPY (BCT)

Admission : 1 – day before surgery as per the waiting list.

Discharge : 1-2 days after surgery.

[May be longer if reconstruction surgery is performed.]

Post- Discharge : You need to stay in Mumbai for at least 15 days.

By the 15th day after Surgery:

- Sutures are removed
- A decision on further management is taken according to the Pathology report.
- A date for radiotherapy will need to be taken at this stage to avoid delay in starting radiotherapy.

CHEMOTHERAPY :

1st cycle of chemotherapy is given soon after suture removal.

5 more cycles of chemotherapy at 3 weekly intervals need to be taken (these may be taken at your native place) or weekly chemotherapy depending upon the protocol prescribed to you.

Total duration of chemotherapy is approximately 4 1 /2 months.

RADIOTHERAPY

As per the appointment given, usually after completing chemotherapy.

Total duration of radiotherapy treatment is 6 – 8 weeks.

You need to stay in Mumbai during this period.

HORMONAL THERAPY

If Tamoxifen (20mg) or aromatase inhibitors are prescribed, needs to be taken daily for 5 years.

MASTECTOMY

Surgery, Radiotherapy, Chemotherapy and Hormone therapy are the 4 modalities of treatment of breast cancer.

Every patient of breast cancer needs to be treated individually. After evaluating various factors as well as considering your own preference, a decision to offer you **mastectomy** i.e. removal of the entire breast is taken.

This leaflet outlines the treatment of breast cancer for you. Hope it will help you to plan your life as you undergo treatment.

This especially aims at helping the outstation patients to plan their stay in Mumbai during the treatment.

MASTECTOMY

Involves removal of the entire breast along with the lymph glands in the armpit.

Admission: Would be a day before surgery as per the waiting list.

Discharge: Within 1 – 2 days after surgery.

Post- Discharge: You need to stay in Mumbai for at least 15 days.

By the 15th day after Surgery

- Sutures are removed.
- A decision on further management is taken according to the pathology report regarding Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy, Hormonal therapy and biological therapy.
- A date for radiotherapy (if needed) will be given at this time.

CHEMOTHERAPY

Chemotherapy is the use of anti-cancer drugs administered intravenously to destroy cancer cells.

Chemotherapy after surgery aims to kill the remaining cancer cells if any.

A maximum of 6 cycles of chemotherapy is given at 3 weekly intervals after checking your blood count at every occasion.

Kindly refer to our leaflet on chemotherapy. It will help you to understand the effects of chemotherapy and how to cope with it.

Chemotherapy is administered at Tata Memorial Hospital on OPD basis, or as a day care admission.

For outstation patients, the first cycle may be taken at Tata Memorial Hospital and the rest of the cycles may be taken at your native place.

A letter with proper instructions for your local doctor shall be given.

RADIOTHERAPY

Radiotherapy or `Light Therapy` prevents the possibility of recurrence of cancer at the operated site with the use of special rays, this improves cure rates.

Following mastectomy, radiotherapy may or may not be needed.

The decision for post -mastectomy radiotherapy is taken depending upon the pathology report.

A date for radiotherapy is given, once the decision for radiotherapy is taken.

Radiotherapy is usually commenced several weeks after surgery (See Later).

You need to stay in Mumbai for 6-7 weeks during this period.

Radiotherapy is given for 5 days a week with rest on Saturday and Sunday. According to the appointment given, you need to attend the OPD daily during this period. The procedure takes less than 30 minutes.

Accommodation can be made available at hospital guesthouse at nominal charges.

After mastectomy, radiotherapy can be taken at a local hospital near your place of residence, provided adequate facilities are available. You may discuss this option with the radiotherapy doctors.

HORMONAL THERAPY

It involves taking a drug called Tamoxifen (20 mg) daily for a period of 5 years. It has very few side effects. In postmenopausal women the newer aromatase inhibitors may be prescribed.

PLANNER FOR MASTECTOMY

Decision Taken: MASTECTOMY

SURGERY

Admission: 1 – day before surgery as per the waiting list.

Discharge: 1-2 days after surgery.

Post- Discharge: You need to stay in Mumbai for at least 15 days.

By the 15th day after Surgery:

- Sutures are removed.
- A decision on further management is taken according to the pathology report.
- A date for radiotherapy (if needed) will be given.

CHEMOTHERAPY (if needed):

1st cycle of chemotherapy is given soon after suture removal.

5 more cycles of chemotherapy at 3 weekly intervals need to be taken (these may be taken at your native place)

Total duration of chemotherapy is approximately 4 1 /2 months.

RADIOTHERAPY

As per the appointment given, usually after completing chemotherapy.

Total duration of radiotherapy treatment is 6-7 weeks.

You need to stay in Mumbai during this period.

HORMONAL THERAPY

If Tamoxifen (20mg) or aromatase inhibitors are prescribed, they need to be taken daily for 5 years.

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The Views expressed are by Tata Memorial Hospital.