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Molecular analysis of sentinel node metastases to fine-tune treatment decisions

More than 100 publications provide evidence on the clinical utility of using OSNA[®] and the CK19 copy number for breast cancer patients. They show that CK19 also provides predictive and prognostic information beyond conventional pathology assessment. This helps to deliver less invasive interventions, more personalised treatment and improves patients' quality of life.

Why the CK19 copy number matters

While the metastatic status of the sentinel node remains important, its significance has changed as clinicians often have to base their decision solely on this information - a major challenge for the radiation oncologist in particular if no axillary dissection has been performed. Data confirm that using the CK19 mRNA concentration to determine the metastatic burden of the sentinel lymph node leads to stronger predictive capabilities in terms of risk for further axillary node involvement [1]. This has been used to establish tools for risk calculation, such as nomograms [2]. Recent studies also indicate a prognostic value that enables patients to be categorised into high / low risk groups based on 5-year disease-free survival [3].

As such, the OSNA[®] result provides the confidence clinicians need to select the most appropriate surgical and non-surgical treatment for individual patients.

At a glance

- Immediate, fully informed decision during surgical procedure
- CK19 mRNA concentration better predicts the risk of non-sentinel involvement [1]
 - Helps to spare unnecessary axillary clearances
 - Helps to identify patients who might benefit from an axillary dissection
- Provides staging information relevant for therapy decision-making even if no axillary dissection is performed (e.g. for radiation oncologists)
- Applicable for patients having received neoadjuvant therapy
- Reduced psychological anxiety for both negative and positive patients
- Included in European and several national guidelines

Bibliography

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- [3] Peq V et al. (2017): Role of total tumour load of sentinel lymph node on survival in early breast cancer patients. Breast. 2017 Feb 27. 33:8–13.

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