

Breast cancer and pregnancy

- Gestational breast cancer

“Woman diagnosed with breast cancer while she is pregnant or in the first twelve months after completion of the pregnancy”

- Subsequent pregnancy

“A pregnancy that begins after breast cancer has been diagnosed”

Breast cancer & pregnancy

Uncommon events so research limited

- Specialised centres
- Options unknown
- Difficult to make
informed choices



Study population

- WA population
- Metro/rural
- Private/public



Our results = Australia

= other western countries

What is different about these women?

- Diagnosis, management & outcomes
- Imaging
- Pathology
- Psychosocial issues

Gestational breast cancer

- 159 women
- One third were pregnant at diagnosis
- Treatment
 - mastectomy
 - chemotherapy



Gestational breast cancer

- Poorer survival than other young women
 - Advanced disease at diagnosis
 - Aggressive tumour characteristics
 - Lymph node status does not make a difference
 - More tumours with medullary like features

Subsequent pregnancy

- 123 cases
- No difference in treatment
- Over half did not wait 2 years to conceive



Subsequent pregnancy

- Better survival compared with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer
- Time from breast cancer diagnosis to pregnancy did not affect survival

Subsequent pregnancy

Proviso: If you are considering pregnancy...

Discuss with your Oncologist

- If you have completed treatment
- Have a good prognosis tumour

...then you may not need to wait two years before attempting to conceive.

Psychosocial issues

- Women diagnosed with gestational breast cancer
- Women diagnosed with breast cancer who had subsequent pregnancy
- Women diagnosed with breast cancer who did not have a subsequent pregnancy



Psychosocial issues

Every woman behaved differently



Psychosocial issues

- Mothering instinct
- Feeling of isolation
- Lack of support/information
- Options/choice



Psychosocial issues

- Want the facts so they can make their own choices
- Want support for their choices and not to be judged
- Improved support networks

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