Reviewer’s report

Title: PRE-OPERATIVE AND INTRA-OPERATIVE DETECTION OF AXILLARY LYMPH NODE METASTASES IN 108 PATIENTS WITH INVASIVE LOBULAR BREAST CANCER UNDERGOING MASTECTOMY

Version: 1 Date: 21 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Schlomo Schneebaum

Reviewer’s report:

This retrospective study with patients included over a time period of 13 years was trying to find whether cytology is a beneficial way to identify lymph node metastasis in patients with lobular carcinoma undergoing mastectomy.

For a reason not explained they don't do a core biopsy preoperatively and don't do frozen section intraoperatively

Cytologist experience is very important and their results show that this is the case in there center however in light of ACOSOG Z011 trial I would anticipate less need for IIC in the future and less experience generated.

The US identified 30 suspicious lymph nodes FNAB was done to all of them identifying 11 of them as positive. In 6 others final pathology identified metastasis.

In a study by Horvath et al. comparing frozen section to IIC analysis they conclude that frozen section analysis of breast cancer patients should remain the standard of care( World J Surg Oncol. 2009).

The other question is the statement that IIC was performed at the discretion of the surgeon, which is not understood if the aim is to decrease the need of a second operation.

26 patients needed a second operation assuming that some had immediate reconstruction I hope that the sentinel was done through a separate incision.

I do think that it should be clearly stated how many had second operation with no IIC ,and how many had reconstruction and of them how many had second surgery.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
No

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
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Yes

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I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
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Acceptable

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