
Presrvaton of pectoralis minor muscle in axillary node clearance of breast cancer

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Summary and Conclusion. Summan aid COleluslolln this study 60 patients with operable breast cancer subjected to modified radical mastectomy they were divided into two equal groups A & B, in group A the pectroalis minor muscle was spread, while in group B the pectoralis minor muscle was removed. Twenty five percent of patients had negative nodes and 75% had positive nodes. When the node-positive patients were subdivided in terms of extent of involvement (1-3, 4-9 and 10 or more) there were similar proportions in both groups. The mean total number of nodes removed in the two groups was similar: 16.5 (range, 7-3) muscle spared group versus 17.5 (range 7-34) muscle removed group. Furthermore, on analyzing the number of dissected lymph nodes in relation to the anatomical level, no difference was observed in numbers, at level I, II, and III in both groups. The early postoperative complications failed to demonstrate any significant difference between the two groups of patient apart from a slight increase in sermoa formation, lymphodema frequency and shoulder dysfunction in patients in whom the pectoralis minor muscle was removed. The patients with pectoralis minor muscle intact had lymphedema (2/30) compared with those in which the muscle had been removed (3/30). We did not find significant difference in pain, winged scapula, or intercostobrachial syndrome after 6 months follow-up. In contrast a highly significant statistical difference was found between the two groups with Summary and C', Jnclusi()n regard to the partial atrophy of the pectoralis major muscle (2/30) for the spared muscle group versus (1 8/30) for the removed muscle group. It is concluded that the mean number of dissected nodes in both procedures was similar. Retention of the pectoralis minor is not associated with under-staging or undertreatment of the axilla and also appears to prevent the partial atrophy and fibrosis of the pectoralis major. Patients treated with preservation of the pectoralis minor muscle showed atrophy of the pectoralis major muscle in (6.6%) of cases versus (60%) observed in the muscle removed group., •• 'tAL _