

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT FINDINGS

- ▷ The total number of breast cancer patients covered by this publication was 2,330 and represents a large prospective series in Hong Kong.

Risk factors

- ▷ The analysis of patients' lifestyle, health background and reproductive history gives clues on the patterns of risk exposures in the local context. Three percent of the patients did not bear any risk factors at the time of diagnosis. Over 85% did not have family history of breast cancer. The three most common risk factors among the patients were lack of exercise, no breast feeding and being overweight/ obese.

Screening habit

- ▷ Breast screening habit is not popular in Hong Kong. The percentages of having regular practices of breast self-examination, clinical breast examination, mammography and breast ultrasound screening were 15.9%, 25.9%, 11.2% and 9.2% respectively.
- ▷ Women with lower education level are less likely to have the habits of regular breast screening. The older the women, the lower the proportion of having regular breast screening habits.

Cancer staging, histological and molecular characteristics and treatment for breast cancer

- ▷ Of the 2,130 patients, the distribution of cancer stages at the time of diagnosis was tabulated and compared with the latest statistics of the Hong Kong Cancer Registry (Hong Kong Cancer Stat 2007)¹.

	Breast Cancer Facts in Hong Kong Report No. 2	Hong Kong Cancer Stat 2007 ¹
Stage 0	11.4%	--
Stage I	31.4%	28.5%
Stage IIA	28.7%	37.7% (Stage II)
Stage IIB	12.3%	
Stage III	12.5%	13.4%
Stage IV	0.8%	4.7%
Unstaged	2.9%	15.5%

- ▷ Histological and molecular characteristics of invasive cancer were tabulated and compared with Western figures:

	Breast Cancer Facts in Hong Kong Report No. 2	Western figures
Histological type		
Ductal	82.4%	91% (Canada) ³
Lobular	4.9%	8% (Canada) ³
Others	12.7%	<2% (Canada) ³
Molecular characteristics		
ER+	75.5%	69% (Canada) ³
PR+	63.5%	46% (Canada) ³
HER2+	23.1%	13% (Canada) ³
Ki67 index ≥12%	51.9%	--
ER-PR-HER2-	12.1%	16% (Canada) ⁴
Lymphovascular invasion	35.5%	43% (Canada) ³

ER+: estrogen receptor positive; *ER-:* estrogen receptor negative
PR+: progesterone receptor positive; *PR-:* progesterone receptor negative
HER2+: human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 positive
HER2-: human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 negative

- ▷ Rates of surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, endocrine therapy and targeted therapy were shown below:

	Breast Cancer Facts in Hong Kong Report No. 2	Western figures
Surgery		
Breast conserving surgery	48.7%	44% (Canada) ³ / 72% (UK) ⁵
Mastectomy	50.0%	55% (Canada) ³ / 26% (UK) ⁵
Reconstruction among patients with mastectomy	17.4%	16.8% (USA) ⁶
Chemotherapy		
67.9%		
Radiation therapy		
64.8%		
Radiation therapy among patient with breast conserving surgery	83.3%	41% (Canada) ³
Radiation therapy to chest wall & regional nodal basin among patients with mastectomy	29.3%	16% (Canada) ³
Endocrine therapy		
64.1%		
Targeted therapy		
7.6%		
Complementary and alternative therapies		
12.9%		
83% (Australia) ⁸		
81% (UK) ⁷		
28.1% (USA) ⁹		

Public medical facility users vs Private medical facility users

- ▷ We had observations on cancer stage distribution, tumour sizes, lymph node involvement and treatment pattern when we divided the patients based on utilisation of medical care.
- ▷ Fewer early stage, larger tumour sizes and more lymph node involvement were found in the patients receiving total public medical care compared to their peers receiving total private medical care.
- ▷ The mastectomy rate in the “total public medical care” group was two folds of the counterpart in the “total private medical care” group.

Psychosocial impact of treatments

- ▷ We looked into influences of treatments and sufferings after treatments. Among all therapies, chemotherapy was considered the most distressing. Not surprisingly, mastectomy patients were found to have more severe discomfort than those who had breast conserving surgery. About 76% reported lifestyle modifications after diagnosis of breast cancer. Coping strategies and adjustments such as positive changes in outlook and in self-image were found to be better adapted in younger age group than in older age group.
- ▷ About 64% of patients worried about recurrence. However, the level of worry about recurrence was highest in youngest patients.

Recurrence and survival

- ▷ The mean follow-up duration in the cohort of 1,630 patients was 2.2 years. The survival and recurrence data we have collected so far are still premature for any conclusion. But the data collection in this area is very promising.

	Breast Cancer Facts in Hong Kong Report No. 2	Western figures
Overall recurrence	4.9%	--
Locoregional recurrence	2.0%	5-year local recurrence rate: 7% (France) ¹⁰
Distant metastasis	2.8%	5-year distant metastasis rate: 8.5% (France) ¹⁰
Death from breast cancer	0.3%	--
Death from unrelated cause	0%	--