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Yoga vs. Chemo: The Breast Cancer Approach

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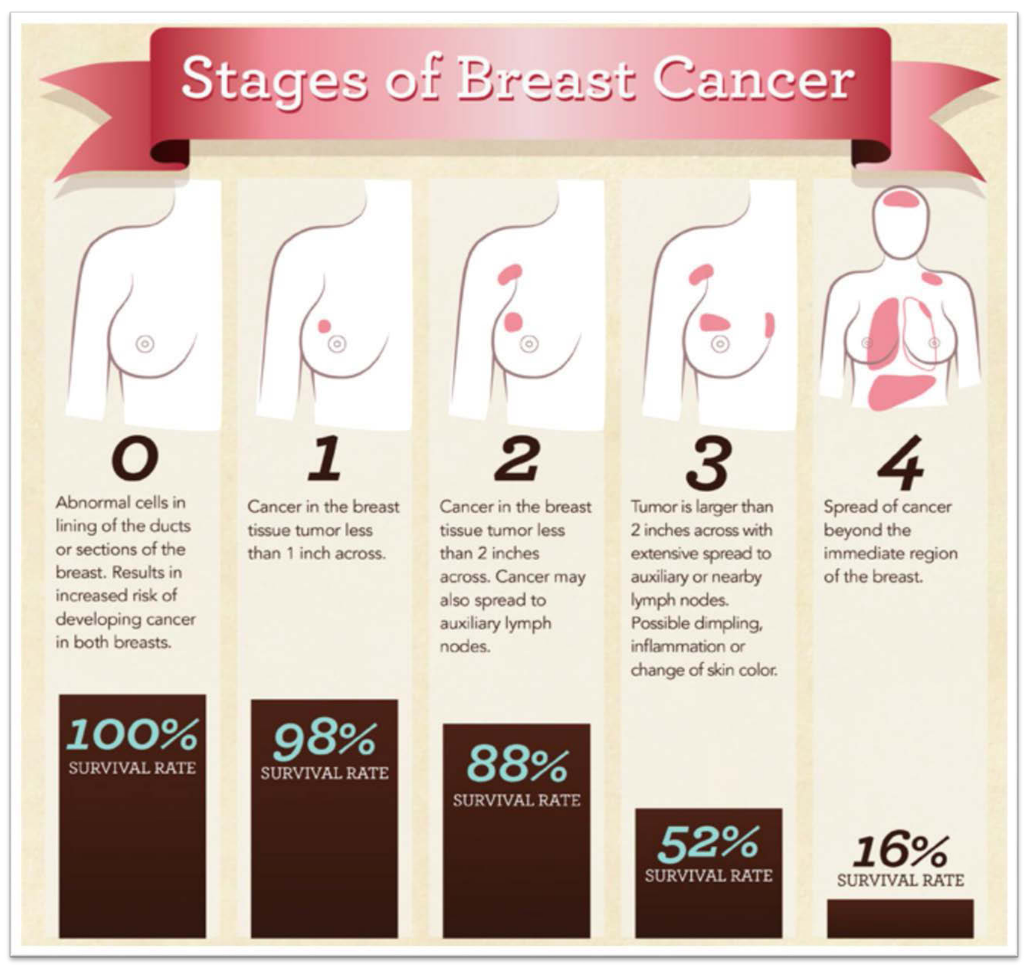
Abstract

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death for women in the U.S. Methods of treatment vary by geographic location. Holistic medicinal approaches for the treatment of breast cancer may be more effective and have fewer side effects than allopathic. Holistic medicine treats the patient as a whole person, taking into consideration their physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well being. Holistic medicine such as nutrition, exercise, homeopathy, prayer, and acupuncture emphasizes healing the body without the overuse of medications. Whereas, allopathic medicine attempts to treat symptoms and diseases using a more targeted approach with drugs, radiation, and surgery. It is imperative that alternative modalities and adjunctive therapies are used to reduce the side effects of breast cancer treatment and increase its efficacy.

Introduction

For this study, we will be observing treatments for all types of breast cancer, from the most invasive to the least invasive types. As of now, there are many "complementary" medicine techniques that have been observed, and only a limited amount have been tested.



When looking at types of treatments, we must organize treatments by holistic approaches and allopathic approaches. Holistic medicine; taking consideration of patients' physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well being, provides a unique, but long-known techniques for breast cancer treatments. The allopathic approach provides a "targeted approach with medical applications, radiation, and surgery; displaying more of an abrasive approach.

Hypothesis

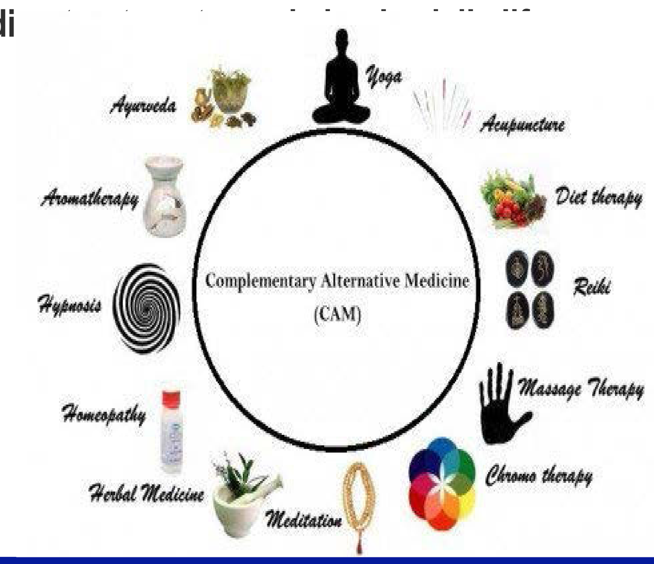
Holistic medicinal approaches for the treatment of breast cancer may increase the effectiveness, reduce the side effects of allopathic medicine, and have additional benefits.

Homeopathic Treatments

Some breast cancer treatments are more useful and come into play during the beginning stages when the cancer is trying to be removed and treated. These treatments like herbal and botanical preparations, along with dietary supplements help to preserve life, and different types of food to help alter pH. Otherwise, different treatments are more effective when trying to create a better quality of life towards the later stages.

These treatments can include but are not limited to:

- **Lowering the pH of the body, the use of turmeric, Cat's claw extract, and Laetrile.**
- **Medical marijuana is a herb can be inhaled or ingested to help stop pain and produce an appetite.**
- **Lifestyle counseling helps the patient to cope with the news of their diagnosis and helps them find solutions to questions regardi**



Homeopathic Treatment Side Affects

Depending on the stage of breast cancer, different homeopathic treatments are available for the treatment, comfort, and overall well being of the patient. During the earlier stages of cancer, it is best to place emphasis on the preservation of life. This may be done by herbal remedies, and by regulating the pH of the body. On the other hand, during the later stages of cancer, it is best for homeopathic treatments to emphasize the quality of life. This can be done through the use of medical marijuana and lifestyle counseling.

- **Turmeric is mainly healthy besides when ingested in large doses, it causes stomach and skin problems.**
- **Cat's claw extract reduces swelling due to anti-inflammatory properties and with short-term use can be safe besides vomiting, headaches, and dizziness.**
- **Laetrile produces cyanide that kills cancer cells, but also kills healthy cells surrounding the cancer.**
- **Manipulating pH is effective because cancer can't live in alkaline environments, but neither can normal cells, so this method can kill both cells and can cause alkalosis.**
- **Medical marijuana decreases dizziness, increases appetite, treats neuropathic pain, reduces anxiety, and treats seizures. But, it can also can cause hallucinations, paranoia and increased heart rate. Marijuana is used to curb the effects of allopathic treatments, it is not used to cure on its own.**
- **Lifestyle counseling helps the patient become more calm, helps the patient to cope with stress, and makes the patient's overall aura become more positive.**

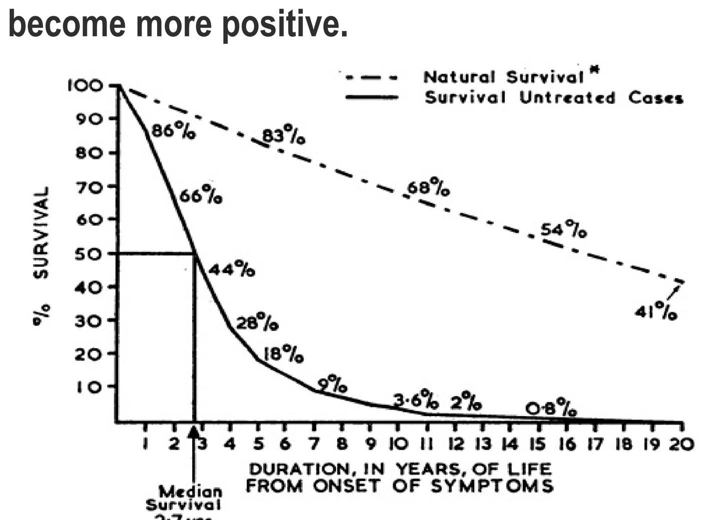


FIG. 1.—Survival of untreated breast cancer. Middlesex Hospital, 1805–1933 (250 cases). *See Appendix.

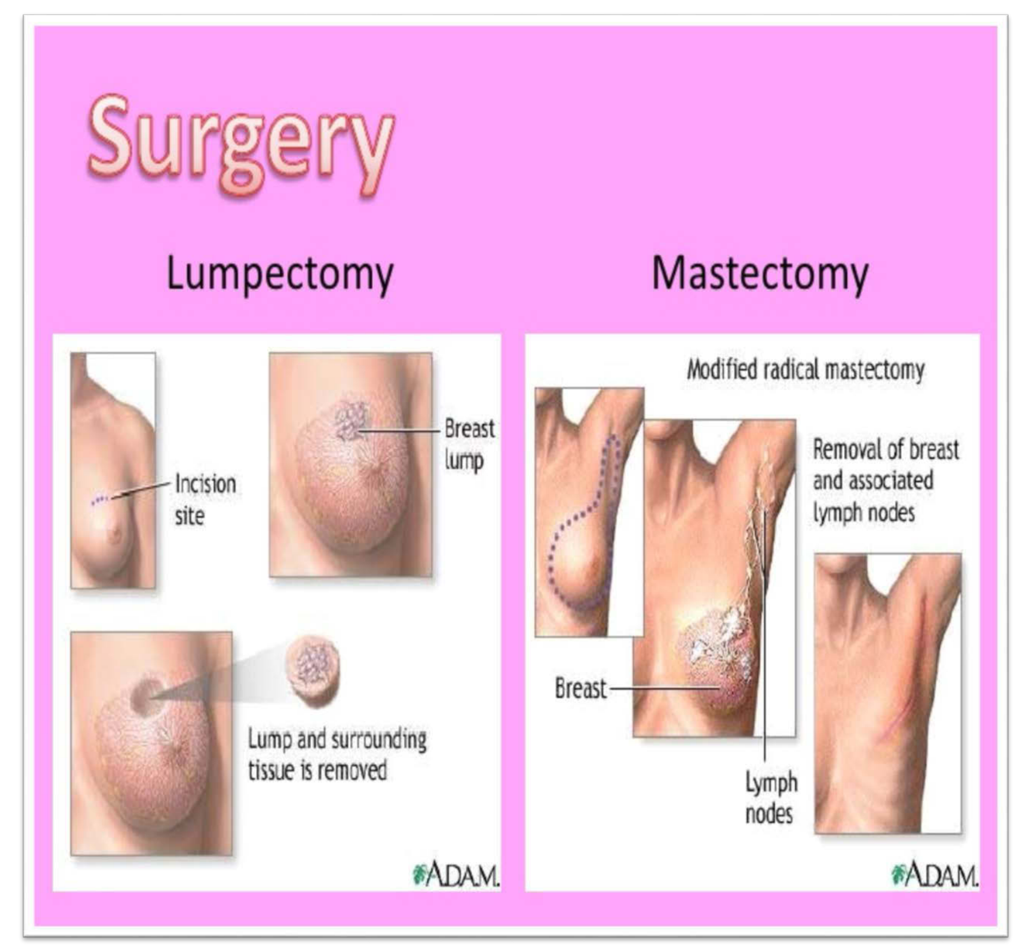
Allopathic Treatments

Chemotherapy kills and prevents cancerous cells to grow after either radiation or surgery has already been done, and intent is to reduce the size of the actual tumor to make it easier to remove during surgery. The treatments are given either orally or injected.

- **Generally, chemotherapy is used to treat the earlier stages of cancer. The treatments get rid of cancer cells that are left behind after surgery, reducing the risk of reoccurrence.**

Surgery is the first line of attack amongst doctors and there are two main types of surgery for breast cancer which are either breast-conserving surgery a.k.a. "Lumpectomy" or a mastectomy.

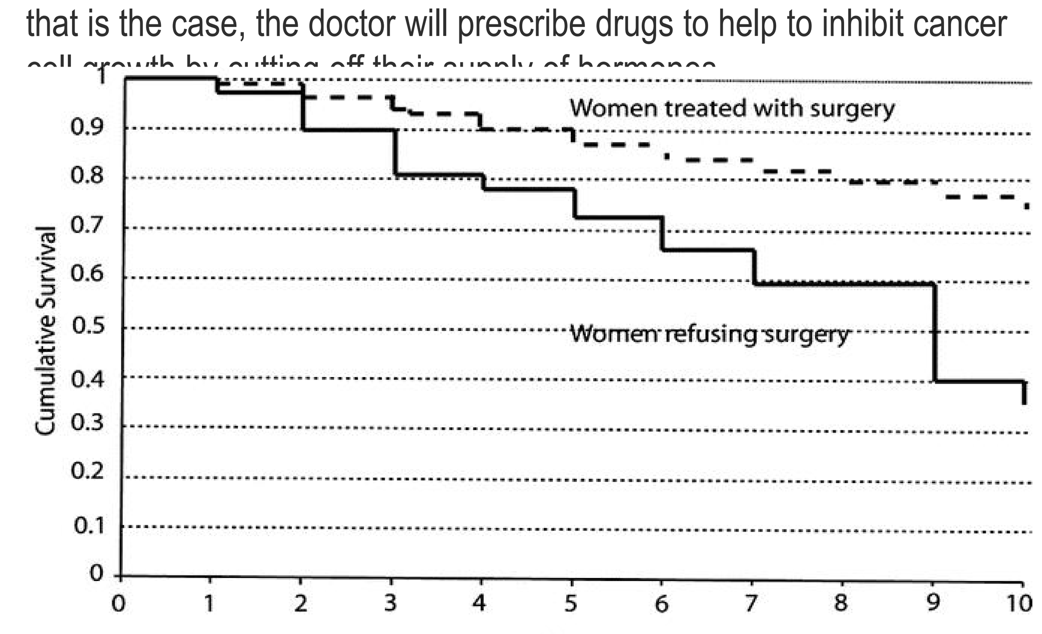
- **Lumpectomy is more of a targeted treatment which is where the only cancerous part of the breast is removed. As for a mastectomy, the whole breast is surgically detached. Same with a lumpectomy, the tissue is removed surrounding the breast that is being removed.**



Radiation uses a substantial amount of energy to kill off cancer cells. The goal is to apply this energy to a certain area on the body such as to the breast and the armpit if necessary after surgery is already done.

- **As always, there are different types of these treatments, so for radiation there is either internal or external radiation. The difference between the two is that external includes using a large machine to treat the cancerous area...meanwhile, the internal method includes newer treatments that inject radiation to the affected area.**

Hormone therapy is a less common treatment that requires hormone blockers. A pathologist will test the estrogen and progesterone receptors to see if they are progesterone or estrogen responsive. When that is the case, the doctor will prescribe drugs to help to inhibit cancer cell growth by cutting off their supply of hormones.



Allopathic Treatment Side Affects

For years, four main allopathic approaches to treating cancer has been the most common among patients: Chemotherapy, Radiation, Surgery and Hormone Therapy. Although these four approaches hold benefits of reducing the size of a tumor, or eliminating the cancer altogether, there has been much controversy over if these methods are truly effective and whether or not these methods are actually doing more harm than good. In fact, chemotherapy and radiation have been found to be carcinogens.

Here are some side effects of the allopathic methods:

- **Chemotherapy: nausea, vomiting, fatigue, loss of appetite, mouth soreness, hair loss, lowered resistance to infections, memory loss and bruising or bleeding easily**
- **Radiation: armpit discomfort, chest pain, fatigue, lowered white blood cell counts, lung problems and heart problems**
- **Surgery/Resection: scar tissue formation, increased risk of infection, fluid collecting under the scar, extra sensitivity to surgical region and psychological issues**
- **Hormone Therapy: fatigue, hot flashes, vaginal dryness or discharge and mood swings**

Many have suggested that allopathic methods are not as effective as purported.

- **In a study, "The Treatment of Diseases and the War against Cancer" by John Cairns from Harvard University, he found that chemotherapy benefits at most 5%, or 1 out of 20 cancer patients.**
- **In "Killing Cancer Inside and Out", a film by Mike Anderson, conventional treatments, such as chemotherapy to major cancers has shown to have a success rate of less than 10% .**

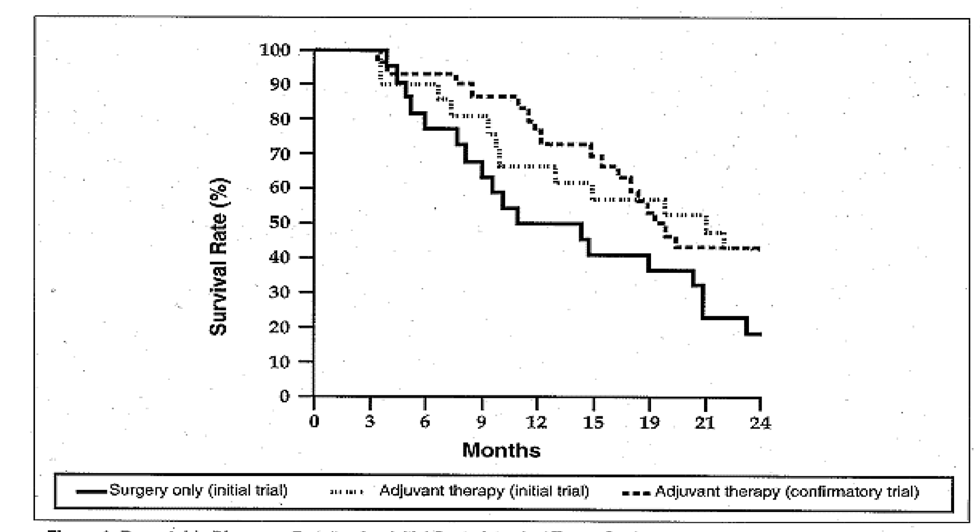


Figure 1: Resectable Disease—Results of an initial Gastrointestinal Tumor Study Group (GITSG) trial, as well as a confirmatory trial, showed a survival advantage for surgery plus adjuvant radiation therapy and chemotherapy over surgery alone in patients with resectable pancreatic cancer.
Adapted, with permission, from Gastrointestinal Tumor Study Group [15].

Conclusion

- **Many people can use homeopathic treatments as a preventive measure. If a patient does develop breast cancer the physician will want to remove and kill the cancer cells as soon as possible to limit the chances of it metastasizing.**
- **With combining both allopathic and homeopathic treatments the patient will have some relief knowing that they still have control over their body.**

Although, chemotherapy and radiation are very good at killing cancer cells it will leave the patient feeling nauseous, weakened immune system and loss of appetite. With introducing a holistic approach the patient's treatments they could use medical marijuana to not only subside the nausea but also elevate the appetite. Combining these treatments may not make the patient feel 100% better but will give them the energy to fight this disease and become successful.

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