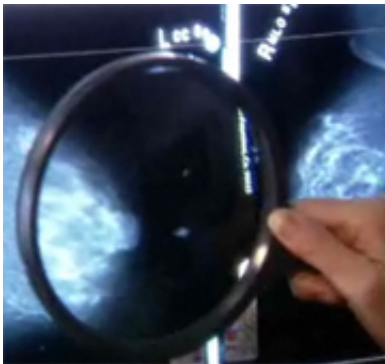


When breast cancer spreads to lungs, surgery may increase survival

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Study suggests patients who have tumors removed could live many extra months.

(HealthDay)—Patients with breast cancer that has spread to the lungs may live longer if they have surgery to remove the lung tumors, a new study from Germany suggests.

The average survival of [breast cancer](#) patients whose cancer has spread (metastasized) to other areas of the body and who undergo conventional chemotherapy regimens ranges from 12 months to 24 months.

It had been believed that surgery would not benefit these patients.

However, this study of 81 patients found that average survival increased to as much as 103 months among patients who had surgery that removed all the cancer from their lungs. Survival ranged from 20 to 23 months for

patients who still had cancer present in their lungs after surgery, according to the study in the April issue of *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*.

"Too often patients with metastatic breast cancer are not considered for surgical treatment, as it is assumed that these patients would not benefit from [surgical interventions](#) for various reasons," Dr. Georgios Meimarakis, of the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, said in a journal news release.

Based on their findings, Meimarakis and his colleagues "highly recommend" that doctors consider surgery for [breast cancer patients](#) whose cancer has spread to the lungs.

These results show that this type of surgery needs to be considered more often as part of a multi-pronged approach to treatment of these patients, Dr. Hans Hoffmann, of the University of Heidelberg, in Germany, said in an accompanying editorial.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more about [breast cancer](#).

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