

# Physicians' peers influence use of new cancer Tx modalities

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(HealthDay)—Physicians whose peers were early adopters of brachytherapy for the treatment of women with early-stage breast cancer are more likely to adopt the therapy themselves, according to a study published in the Aug. 15 issue of *Cancer*.

Craig Evan Pollack, M.D., from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and colleagues analyzed data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program (2003 through 2004) to classify surgeons as early [brachytherapy](#) adopters and, among non-early adopters, whether they shared patients with early adopters (peer exposure). Secondly, data from 2005 through 2006 were examined to determine whether women were more likely to receive brachytherapy if their surgeons were exposed to early adopters.

The researchers found that the percentage of women receiving brachytherapy increased from 3.2 percent in 2003-2004 to 4.7 percent in 2005-2006. A total of 2,087 patients were assigned to 328 non-early adopting surgeons during the 2005-2006 timeframe. Patients whose surgeons were connected to early adopters from 2003-2004 were found to be significantly more likely to receive brachytherapy from 2005-2006, compared to women whose surgeons were not connected to early adopters (8.0 versus 4.1 percent;  $P = 0.003$ ), in unadjusted analysis.

"The results of the current study provide an example of a novel approach to examining the diffusion of innovation in [cancer care](#)," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed [financial ties](#) to the medical device industry.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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