

Freezing technique is an effective alternative to lumpectomy for early stage breast cancer

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A deep-freezing technique known as cryoablation is a viable alternative to traditional surgery in many early-stage breast cancers, NewYork-Presbyterian and Weill Cornell Medicine researchers find in a new clinical study. The results are published in the *Annals of Surgical Oncology*.

"Minimally invasive techniques are becoming increasingly popular in cancer care, and cryoablation represents a valid option for early stage breast cancer treatment," said Dr. Rache Simmons, chief of [breast surgery](#) at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center and the Anne K. and Edwin C. Weiskopf Professor of Surgical Oncology at Weill Cornell Medicine. "The results from this trial are extremely promising, and we look forward to exploring the technique for a greater number of patients."

In cryoablation, doctors use ultrasound imaging to insert a thin, needle-like device into the patient's tumor. Once inside, the device emits liquid nitrogen, which freezes and destroys the cancerous tissue. The technique can be performed in an outpatient setting under local anesthesia, and has been used for many years to treat cancers of the liver, lung and kidney, as well as noncancerous breast tumors, known as fibroadenomas. Physicians have only recently begun using it for early-stage breast cancer, which is traditionally treated by a combination of radiation and surgery. The phase II, non-randomized trial examined 86 patients with 87 cancers at 19 centers across the country. The technique successfully treated 92 percent of the targeted cancers, and 100 percent less than one

centimeter. The primary tumor was removed from the patients within 28 days of the cryoablation.

The trial marks the first time cryoablation has been studied for the treatment of [early-stage breast cancer](#) in a multicenter study.

"Further study is needed, but cryoablation appears to represent a unique and patient-friendly option for treatment of some breast cancers," Dr. Simmons said. "We're excited to see what the future holds for this technique."

Provided by New York- Presbyterian Hospital

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