

Surgery benefits older women with breast cancer

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Micrograph showing a lymph node invaded by ductal breast carcinoma, with extension of the tumour beyond the lymph node. Credit: Nephron/Wikipedia

In a *BJS (British Journal of Surgery)* analysis of 18,730 older patients with oestrogen receptor- positive breast cancer in the UK, the risk of dying from breast cancer was greater in patients treated with primary endocrine therapy than in those who received surgery.

For the study, researchers analysed [cancer](#) registration data from two English regions from 2002 to 2010. Only 69 percent of women survived for 5 years if they received only endocrine therapy (anti-oestrogen drugs, such as tamoxifen or aromatase inhibitors), compared with 90 percent of women who had surgery.

The study's investigators note that primary endocrine therapy is used in up to 40 per cent of women in the UK with early [breast cancer](#) over age 70 years.

More information: S. E. Ward et al, Omission of surgery in older women with early breast cancer has an adverse impact on breast cancer-specific survival, *British Journal of Surgery* (2018). [DOI: 10.1002/bjs.10885](#)

Provided by Wiley

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