

## Breast Cancer: Fear of the Unknown

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Globally, breast cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer deaths among women. Over 1.1 million women worldwide are diagnosed with breast cancer annually and about half a million die from it each year.<sup>1,2</sup> However, death rates from breast cancer have continued to decrease since 1990. The decrease is in part due to advances in treating breast cancer, as well as earlier detection and increased awareness. However, breast cancer remains a major medical and social problem with no decisive, curative treatment. This disease is no longer considered a single localized disease with radical surgery as the sole treatment. Rather, it is viewed as a heterogeneous systemic disease that requires the alertness of a team of well-informed, motivated physicians who believe in a multidisciplinary approach to breast cancer.

The causes of breast cancer are not yet fully known although a number of risk factors have been identified. There are many different types of breast cancer. Although the most frequent histopathologic types are ductal and lobular carcinoma, one of the diverse malignant diseases

that may involve the breast is malignant lymphoma. Breast lymphoma is a rare condition, both as a primary and a metastatic manifestation. The primary form has an incidence of 0.04% to 0.5% of all breast neoplasms, whereas the metastatic form has an incidence of 0.07%.<sup>3</sup> Most lymphomas of the breast are of B-cell origin, with only rare cases showing the T-cell phenotype.<sup>4</sup> It is still unclear whether breast implantation increases the risk of secondary hematological malignancies such as lymphoma, as described in some published case reports. Whatever the cause may be, histologic grade determines the management of primary non-Hodgkin lymphoma of the breast. Patients with low-grade lymphoma are managed with only local therapy whereas those with intermediate- or high-grade disease will have a better outcome if chemotherapy is also considered.<sup>5</sup>

The incidence of various types of breast cancer, its outcome in terms of survival and the psychological and social impacts, as well as public health issues have become the primary focus of scientists,

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researchers and clinicians. Such personnel are working to solve the problems of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer. The massive growth of cancer research in conjunction with new ideas and discoveries in cancer biology and therapies bring a pressing need for up-to-date overviews of new developments and clinical experiences in the treatment of breast cancer and other malignant diseases. Although journals have become specialized with regards to pathway or clinical situation, it is my wish that the Middle East Journal of Cancer will become a flourishing cross, multidisciplinary journal, and the journal of choice for cancer research and treatment.

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