BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

U.S. researchers develop an online tool that imparts knowledge of breast cancer treatment options

02 February 2018 | News

The interactive site was designed to walk people systemically through key facts about breast cancer surgery, such as how often cancer recurs and the likelihood of needing additional surgery.



Researchers from Cancer Surveillance and Outcomes Research Team at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center have developed an interactive tool to help patients in the complex decision-making process about their treatment of breast cancer.

According to a previous study published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology, patients using the interactive tool had higher knowledge and felt more prepared to make a treatment decision, as compared to static informational website users.

Researchers enrolled 537 patients with newly diagnosed early-stage, breast cancer from multiple practices spread throughout four states. Patients were randomized to view a tailored, interactive decision tool called iCanDecide or to view similar information on a static website.

They were then surveyed about five weeks later, after making their treatment decision. Of all participants, 496 completed the survey. Overall, 61% of patients who used the interactive tool had a higher knowledge of treatment options, compared to 42%, who viewed the static material.

Patients who used the interactive tool were also more likely to say they felt prepared to make a treatment decision.

The interactive site was designed to walk people systemically through key facts about breast cancer surgery, such as how often cancer recurs and the likelihood of needing additional surgery.

A second module on the website helped patients understand options for systemic treatment, such as chemotherapy. The paper assesses only the surgery module.

The tool also assessed patients' values, taking them through a series of hypothetical scenarios. In the end, each patient had a customised bar graphic that showed how their preferences matched to treatments. For example, if they valued keeping their natural breast, the lumpectomy bar would be higher. Patients could interact with the figure to learn more.

A similar number of patients from both groups reported making a choice in line with their values.

The tool was funded by National Cancer Institute and developed by Michigan Medicine.