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PATIENTS' ATTITUDE TO BREAST CONSERVING SURGERY FOR BREAST CANCER IN WEST CHINA

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Background: There seems to be geographical differences in decisions about breast conserving surgery (BCS) in breast cancer patients. This study was to evaluate patients' attitude to BCS and to assess the factors affecting cancer practice in West China.

Methods: A structured questionnaire was distributed to 184 patients, eliciting information about the patients' characteristics, occupation, education, family life, recognition of illness, knowledge about BCS, the main means of gaining surgery information, selecting surgery approaches, preferences to breast reservation.

Results: In all, 163 patients completed the questionnaire. The results indicated that only 7.4% of patients received BCS and 23% of the remaining patients desired to have BCS and the affecting factors were significantly associated with their family life, recognition of illness and the main means of gaining surgery information ($P < 0.05$). No associations were between BCS selecting and the other variables studied. The most frequent reasons for selecting BCS were keeping the female shape and improving quality of life (71%), the second most were postoperative recovery, minimal influence of physical function (47%) and patients' knowledge about BCS (42%). The most frequent reasons for not selecting BCS were uncertainty about BCS results and worry about recurrence (81%), the second most was the elderly age unnecessary for BCS (40%).

Conclusions: The findings indicate that breast cancer patients in West China do not take BCS as the first choice as the best treatment method. It is warranted that further study of more patients, attitude of patients' partners and physicians to BCS.