

Preoperative Axillary Lymph Node Ultrasound May Prevent Sentinel Node Biopsy, Reoperation.

MedPage Today (10/6, Phend) reported, "Ultrasound of axillary lymph nodes before breast cancer surgery, with fine-needle aspiration for confirmation of metastases, could spare many early-stage patients from sentinel node biopsy and reoperation," according to a study reported at the ASCO Breast Cancer Symposium. Participants with "suspicious" axillary lymph nodes "on ultrasound proceeded to fine-needle aspiration cytology." Patients with positive findings "had all axillary nodes removed at the time of lumpectomy." But, "if they were negative or if ultrasound had picked up no unusual deposits, patients had sentinel lymph node biopsy during surgery." Researchers found that among 57 women who "showed nodal macrometastases," the "ultrasound and fine-needle aspiration had caught 29.8 percent." The technique showed "a sensitivity of 29.8 percent, specificity of 100 percent, positive predictive value of 100 percent, and negative predictive value of 84.4 percent."