

## Perioperative Concerns in Breast Cancer Surgery during COVID-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract

Statement of the Problem: Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in women all over the world, with increasing incidences due to various reasons. These include greater awareness about the occurrence of breast cancer, early detection, increase in life-style and stress-related diseases, hormonal imbalances and diet. Operative treatment forms the mainstay of management along with chemotherapy and radiotherapy. The current COVID-19 pandemic is an eye opener for all the stake-holders in health-care sector. The inadequate health systems are currently overwhelmed by COVID-19, that other diseases like cancer have taken a back seat in most institutions. Breast cancer can spread further if surgical treatment is delayed in resectable tumors, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality. COVID testing must be done for patients posted for these surgeries. Complete asepsis must be maintained during patient handling and all procedures. In addition, regional anesthetic techniques must be utilized in all patients to reduce the stress response and anesthetic requirements.

### Conclusion & Significance:

Breast cancer detection and management should not be delayed due to crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic. Such onco-surgeries must be done in dedicated non-COVID centers after requisite testing and taking adequate barrier precautions and asepsis.

Dr Uma Hariharan is a medical graduate (MBBS) from the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, India (2000). She completed her three-years post-graduation in Anaesthesiology [Diplomate of National Board of Examinations (DNB)] from Sir Ganga Ram Hospital & GRIPMER (Ganga Ram Institute of Post-graduate Medical Education & Research), New Delhi in 2007. She was felicitated with the "Best DNB Student Award" for overall excellence during her anaesthesia training. She was conferred with the "Best Debater Award" for her talk on medical education on the "World Anaesthesia Day" celebrations in Delhi, 2005. She won the "Best Paper Presentation Award" in the National Pain Conference held in Delhi, 2006. She also won the "Best Poster Presentation Award" at National ISA (Indian Society

of Anaesthesiologists) Delhi Conference in 2011. Dr Uma Hariharan is also a certified, ATLS faculty (Advanced Trauma Life Support, under the aegis of American College of Surgeons, USA) since 2011 and a NELS (National Emergency Life Support, conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India) Instructor. She regularly teaches at the ATLS and NELS Provider courses, held all over India. She has been working as an independent consultant since 2011. Dr Uma Hariharan has also done "Post-Graduate Diploma in Hospital Management" (PGDHM) from the "National Institute of Health & Family Welfare" (NIHFW, Munirka), New Delhi, India, in 2012. She completed "Fellowship in Onco-anaesthesia" from the largest tertiary care and teaching, cancer hospital of North-India, Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre, New Delhi, 2014. She obtained proficiency in all aspects of anaesthesia for different oncological operations, with special thrust, on Robotic surgeries. She topped the medical teachers' selection list for Anaesthesiology conducted by the national government body, UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) in 2015, currently working as Associate Professor in Dr RML Hospital & PGIMER, New Delhi, India. She also undertook the "Aesculap Academy Fellowship in Advanced, Ultrasound-Guided Regional Anaesthesia" from Ganga Hospital and Research Centre, Coimbatore, India (2017). Dr Uma Hariharan successfully completed her training in Palliative Medicine and Cancer Pain Management (Certificate Course in Essentials of Palliative Care - CCEPC), from All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, under the aegis of Indian Academy of Palliative Care (IAPC) in 2018. She was honoured with the coveted "Hall of Fame Award" for all-round achievements at the Ganga Anaesthesia Refresher Course of 2018 (GARC, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India). Dr Uma Hariharan has written and published nearly 100 journal articles (original research, review articles, case reports) and book chapters. In recognition of her achievements in the field of anaesthesiology, she has been conferred with the prestigious award of "FELLOW OF INDIAN COLLEGE OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS" (FICA) in the annual conference of the 'Indian College of Anaesthesiologists' in 2018. She successfully cleared the European Diploma in Anaesthesiology & Intensive Care (EDAIC) Part 1 in 2017 and Part 2 in 2018 (both in First Attempt). Her special areas of interests include pain management, transplant anaesthesia and critical care.