

A. Taghian: The Myths and the Evidence in Lymphedema: Precautionary Measures After Treatment for Breast Cancer

SUMMARY: Evidence shows that medical procedures in the at-risk arm, including venipuncture and blood pressure measurements, are not associated with increased arm volume in the presence of a BCRL screening program. In spite of lack of supporting data, patients have been advised for years to avoid many activities of the arm at risk for BCRL. Furthermore, some patients are at bilateral risk of BCRL after bilateral lymph node surgery, yet may require medical procedures in the arm. These recommendations negatively impact quality of life and are not evidence-based. Common myths and current evidence around precautionary measures after breast cancer will be presented. Prospective BCRL screening and comprehensive patient education is paramount to empower patients to make informed decisions and to detect BCRL at its early stages for those at risk.

PRESENTER:



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Dr Alphonse Taghian is Professor of Radiation Oncology at Harvard Medical School and Director of the Lymphedema Research Program at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He earned his Medical Degree from Alexandria University in Egypt. He completed his residency in Radiation Oncology in France, after which he pursued his PhD in Radiobiology from Paris University.

An internationally recognized leader in breast radiation oncology and lymphedema research, Dr Taghian has published more than 200 peer reviewed articles, general reviews and chapters. He has edited 2 books. He was awarded several NIH grants totaling around \$2.7 Million for research in breast cancer related lymphedema.