



Post-Prostatectomy Radiation Tied to Urinary Incontinence

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By David Douglas

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) Feb 20 - Radiotherapy after radical prostatectomy may reduce cancer recurrence, but at the cost of urinary continence, Italian researchers say.

"The oncologic benefits of adjuvant radiation therapy must be balanced with impaired urinary continence recovery, and patients should be informed of such impairment before adjuvant treatments are planned," Dr. Nazareno Suardi told Reuters Health by email.

In a February 4th online paper in *European Urology*, Dr. Suardi and colleagues at University Vita-Salute San Raffaele, Milan report on 361 men Dr. Suardi described as having "unfavorable pathological characteristics," i.e., either pT2 disease with positive surgical margins or pT3a/pT3b node-negative disease.

At a mean follow-up of 30 months, 254 (70.4%) had recovered complete urinary continence (UC), defined as no use of protective pads.

At one year, 51% of the 153 men in the radiation group had achieved urinary continence, compared to 81% of the 208 men who didn't have radiation. Corresponding proportions at three years were 59% and 87%.

Univariate analysis showed that among factors associated with poorer continence recovery were being older, having a non-nerve-sparing procedure and receiving adjuvant radiation. On multivariate analysis, radiation conferred a 1.6-fold higher risk of incontinence.

The researchers point out that while level 1 evidence shows that adjuvant radiation improves cancer control in these patients, most patients with pT3 disease and/or positive surgical margins are not currently receiving it.

It appears, they say, that "the delivery of adjuvant radiation therapy has a detrimental effect on urinary continence recovery itself as well as on time to urinary continence recovery."

SOURCE: <http://bit.ly/VKgZBp>

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