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Contemporary Analysis of Malignancies in Women of Child-Bearing Age: An NSQIP Analysis

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Background: Recent evidence suggests that cancer incidence among pregnant women is increasing. The pattern of malignancies in pregnant women and how these compare to their nonpregnant counterparts has not been explored. Here we describe the differences in the proportion of resected malignancies in this population.

Methods: The American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS-NSQIP) database was used to identify women aged 18-49 who underwent an operation for malignancy from 2007-2012. Age-adjusted distribution of specific surgical interventions for malignancy based on ICD-9 codes were compared among pregnant and non-pregnant women using logistic regression analysis.

Results: 42,732 subjects with malignancies surgically treated during child-bearing age were identified. 0.33% (n=143) were pregnant. The most common tumors requiring resection were breast (51%), thyroid (17%), and colorectal (9%). The distribution for most cancers was similar between groups. The age-adjusted proportion was significantly increased in breast, major salivary gland and oropharyngeal malignancies ($p<0.05$). The proportion of resected colorectal cancers was significantly lower in pregnant women ($p<0.05$; Table 1).

Conclusion: This study serves as the first comprehensive and contemporary overview of malignancies resected in women of childbearing age. This study demonstrates that the proportion of resections among pregnant women was significantly greater in breast, major salivary gland and oropharyngeal cancers and lower for colorectal cancers. While these data might represent true differences in cancer incidence, further work is necessary to demonstrate if these are true differences in incidence versus differences in detection and treatment of the pregnant patient.

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