



**FUNDACION**  
**M A R I E C U R I E**  
*Córdoba - Argentina*



**Congreso sobre Avances Integrados en Oncología, Radiocirugía y Física Médica:  
Innovación y Precisión en el tratamiento del cáncer**

## Indicación de irradiación ganglionar en pacientes N0



Philip Poortmans, MD, PhD

Iridium Network & Antwerp University, Antwerpen (B)



*The future of cancer therapy*

**ESTRO**

Former President



# Conflict of interest

Affidea – medical advisor

MSD - consultant

And I worry about the future...



# RNI after upfront surgery for N0-disease

- Introduction – a word about history
- Evidence – from the past
- More recent data
- What to wait for
- Take home messages

# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

Who of you would advise/give RNI to N0-patients?

- Never
- In  $\leq 25\%$  of N0 cases
- In 25-75% of N0 cases
- In  $\geq 75\%$  of N0 cases

# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

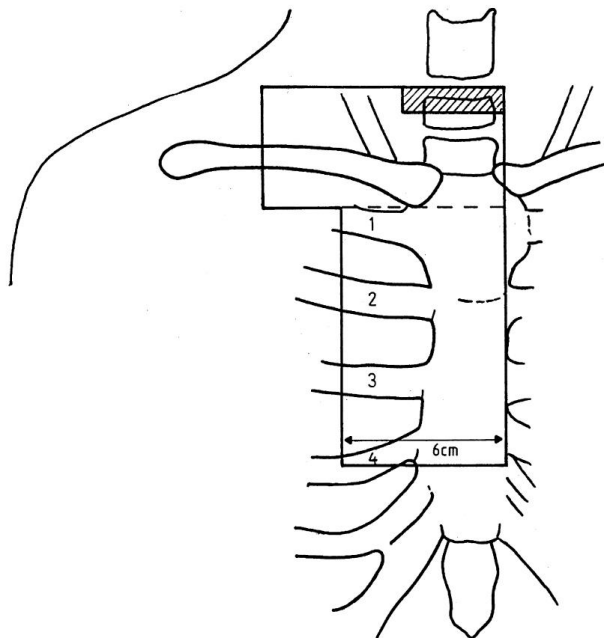
## What we learned during my residency training:

- RT improves locoregional control
- Systemic T ( $preMP=CMF*6$ ;  $postMP=tam20mg$ ) delays recurrences
- Survival is about stage
- All breast cancer is equal
- Introduction BST – always (in Europe) + WBI & boost (BT)
- PMRT for all N+ and central/medial located N0
- Field-based RT

# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

So what we actually **thought that we** did:

With RNI



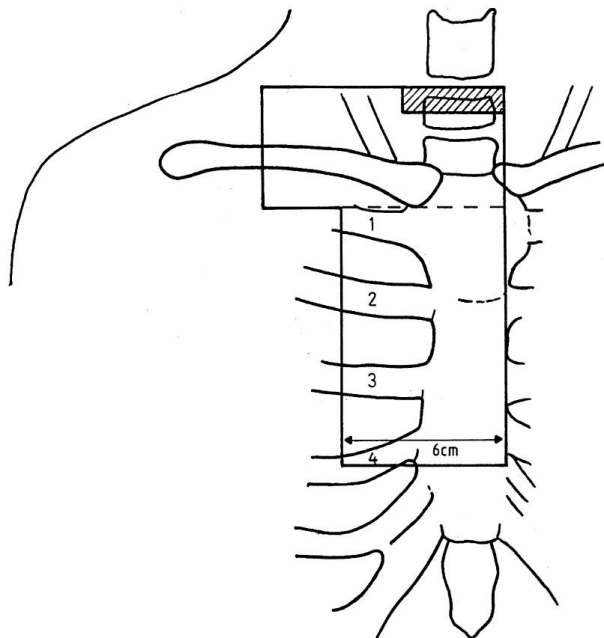
Without RNI



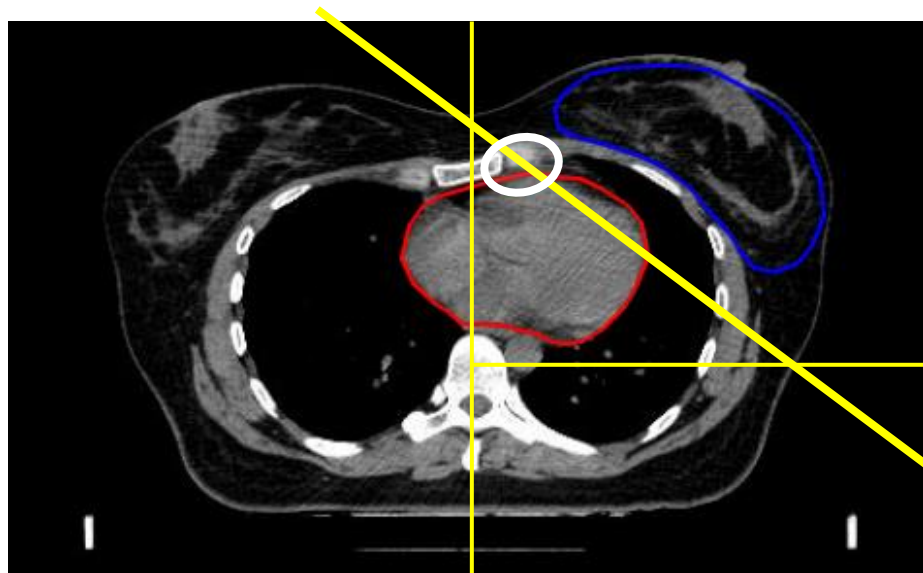
# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

So what we actually ~~thought that we~~ did:

With RNI



Without RNI





# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

So what we actually ~~thought that we~~ did:

With RNI

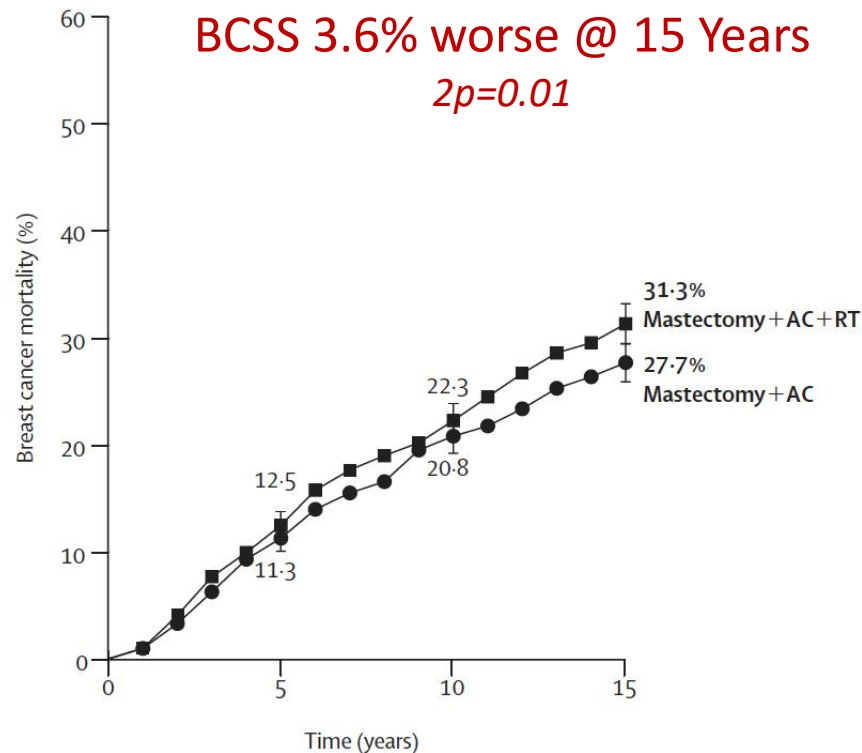
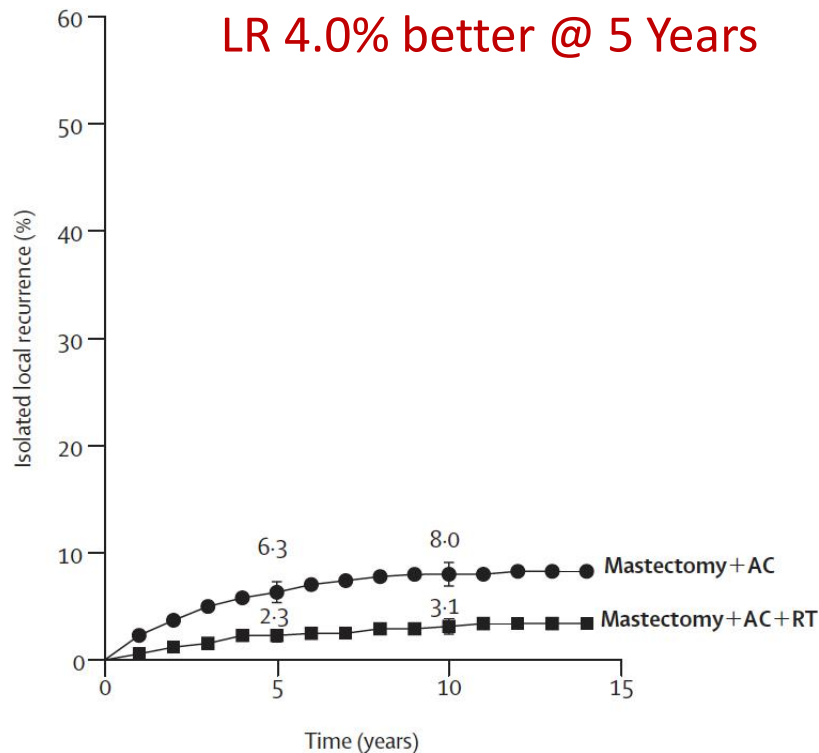
Without RNI

Table 6. Summary of the dose at the internal mammary lymph node chain for both treatment arms

% of prescribed dose:	<50%	50–84%	≥85%
Arm 1 = without RNI	90	6	4
Arm 2 = with RNI	5	16	79

# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

*1428 women with node-negative disease after mastectomy with axillary clearance*

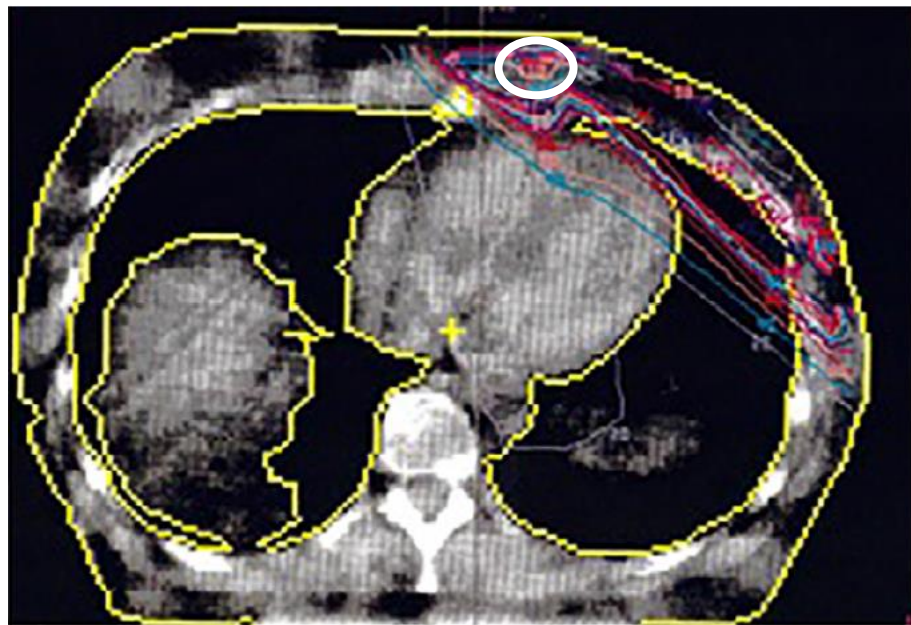


# RNI for N0-disease: *Introduction – a word about history*

*But what was the real reason to abandon IMN-RT ... or to develop new techniques?*



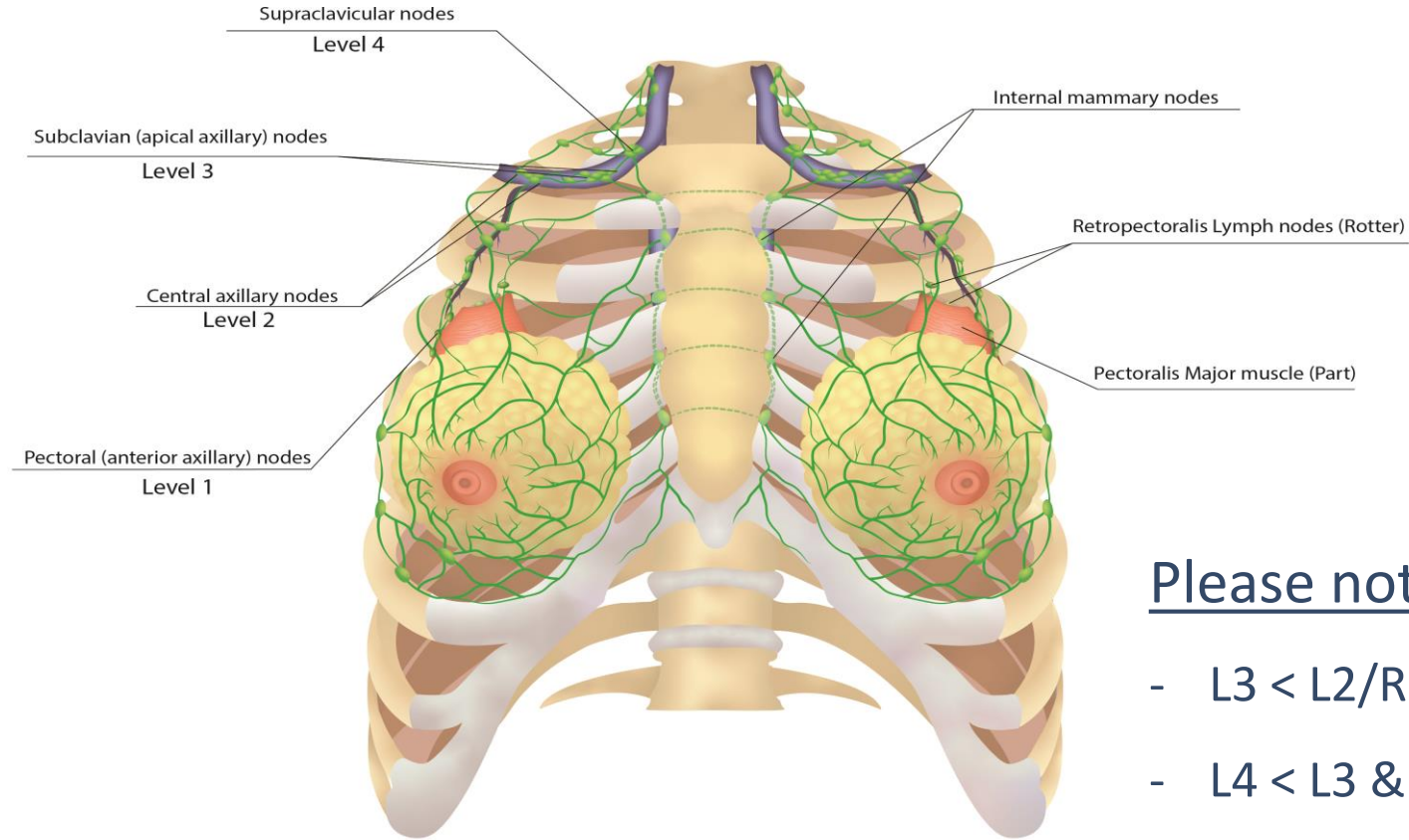
BVI-technique 1995: from up to  $\geq 185\%$   
hotspot to  $\leq 135\%$



# RNI after upfront surgery for N0-disease

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# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*



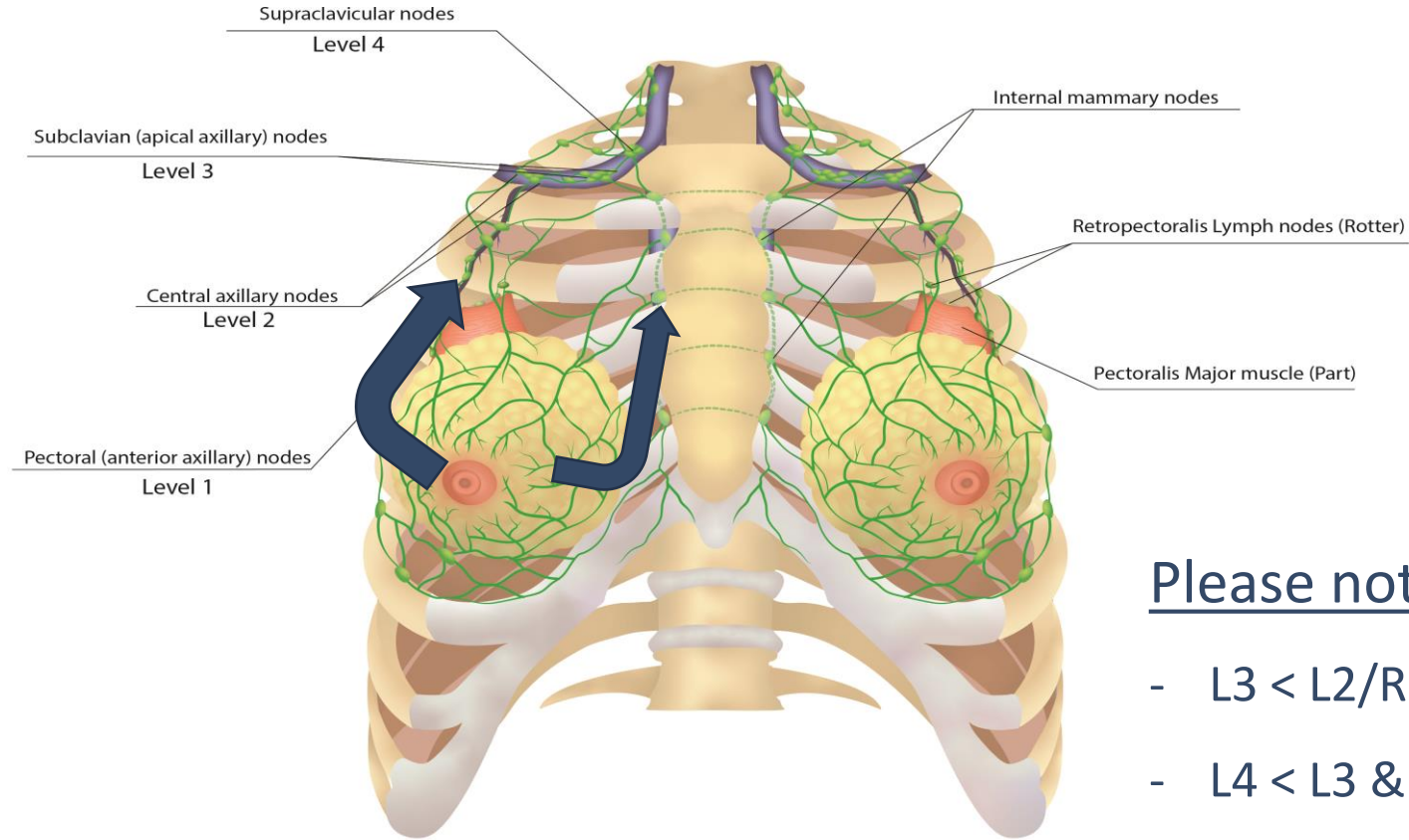
Please note:

- $L3 < L2/R \text{ \& IMC}$
- $L4 < L3 \text{ \& IMC}$

*Alon Derson*

*Kaidar-Person O, et al. R&O 2019;137:159–166.*

# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*



Please note:

- $L3 < L2/R \text{ \& } IMC$
- $L4 < L3 \text{ \& } IMC$

*Alon Derson*

*Kaidar-Person O, et al. R&O 2019;137:159–166.*

# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

The frequency of internal  
mammary chain (IMC)  
drainage as a function of  
primary tumour location  
( $P=0.017$ )

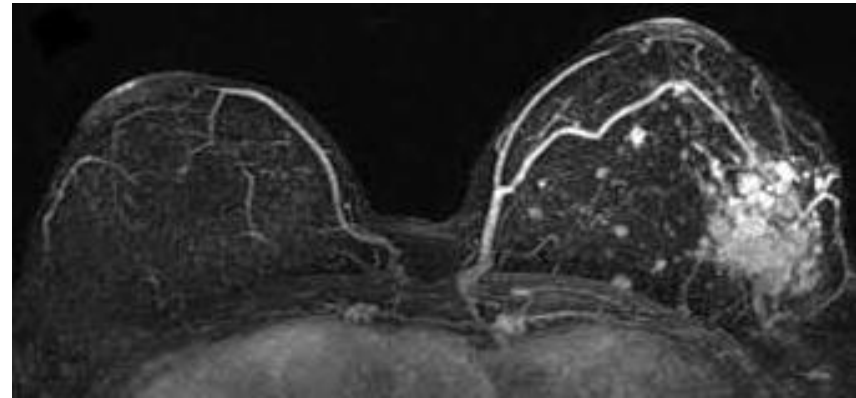
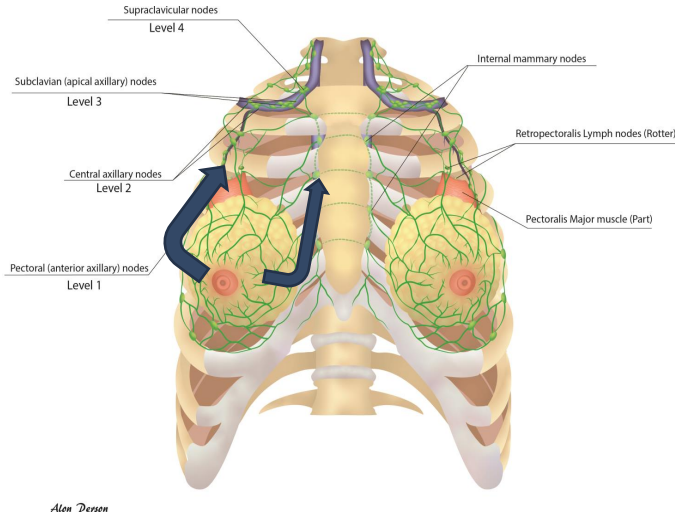
Tumour quadrant	Number of Patients (%)	Rate of drainage to IMC (%)
Upper outer	128 (46)	14.1
Upper inner	30 (11)	16.7
Lower outer	19 (7)	31.6
Lower inner	14 (5)	42.9
Central	88 (31)	28.4



# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

## Other factors influencing drainage:

- Deep lymphatic plexus more ➔ IMC
- Site of injection for SLNB: IT > periT >> subareolar/subdermal ➔ IMC



<https://breast-cancer.ca/mrifacts/>



# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

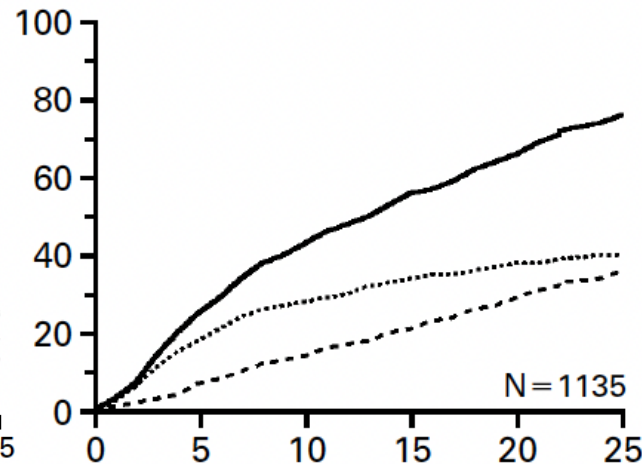
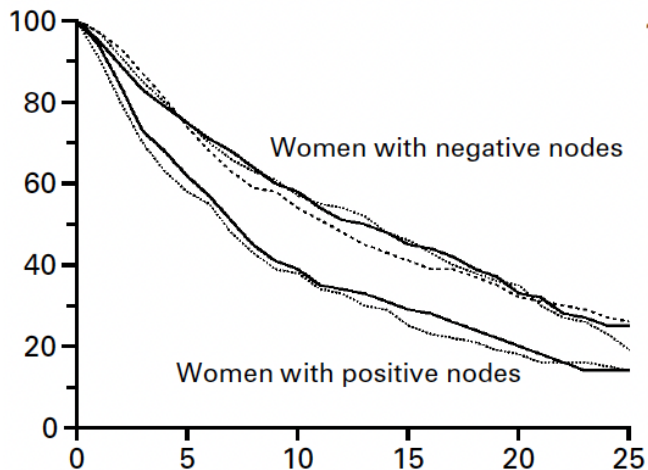
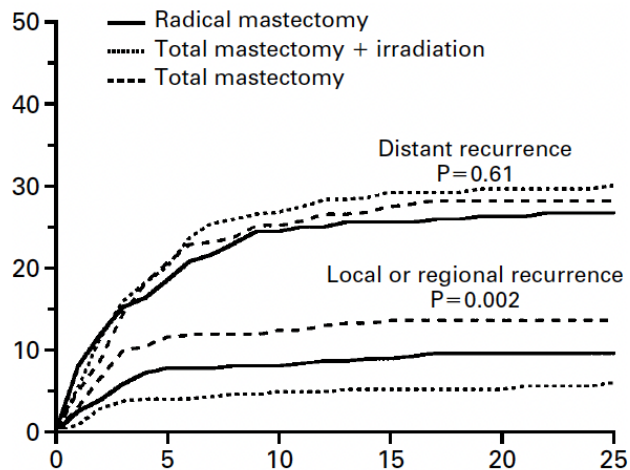
*NSABP B-04 (1971-74): n=1079 cN0: radical mast. vs total mast. + PMRT vs total mast.*

Total mastectomy = without ALND; radical mast. = 40% pN+; total mast. = 18.6% RR (not considered as such)

LR – RR – DM

Overall survival

Causes of death



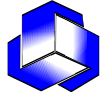
# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

*NSABP B-04 (1971-74): n=1079 cN0: radical mast. vs total mast. + PMRT vs total mast.*

Total mastectomy = without ALND; radical mast. = 40% pN+; total mast. = 18.6% RR (not considered as such)

TM alone: 21% of patients without any nodes removed developed an axillary recurrence  
12% in patients who had “incidentally” 1 to 5 nodes removed  
none in those with  $\geq 6$  “incidentally” removed

RM: nodal recurrences exclusively occurred if  $\geq 4$  involved nodes



# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

## Internal Mammary and Medial Supraclavicular Irradiation in Breast Cancer

*N = 1778 / 4004 are pN0*

**Internal mammary and medial supraclavicular lymph node chain irradiation in stage I–III breast cancer (EORTC 22922/10925): 15-year results of a randomised, phase 3 trial**

# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

*Comprehensive regional LN irradiation – pulled together*

## **Radiotherapy to Regional Nodes in Early Breast Cancer: An Individual Patient Data Meta-Analysis of 14,324 Women in 16 Trials.**

*N = 2188 are pN0 → 81% < EORTC trial*

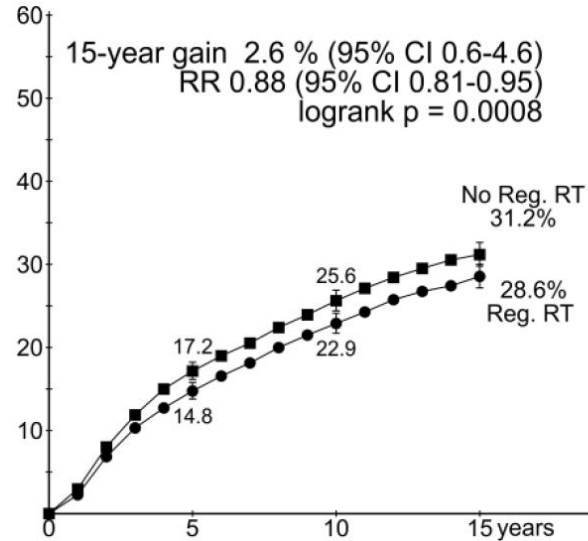
**Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group\* (EBCTCG)**

# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

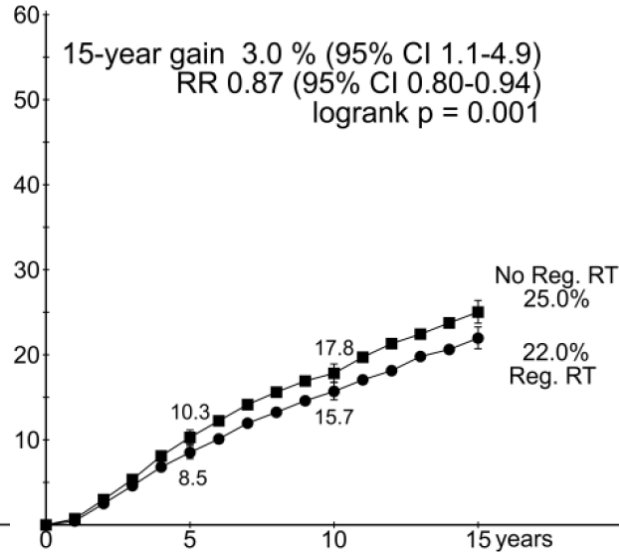
*Comprehensive regional LN irradiation – pulled together*

*New trials, starting after 1989, only ( $n = 12167$ )*

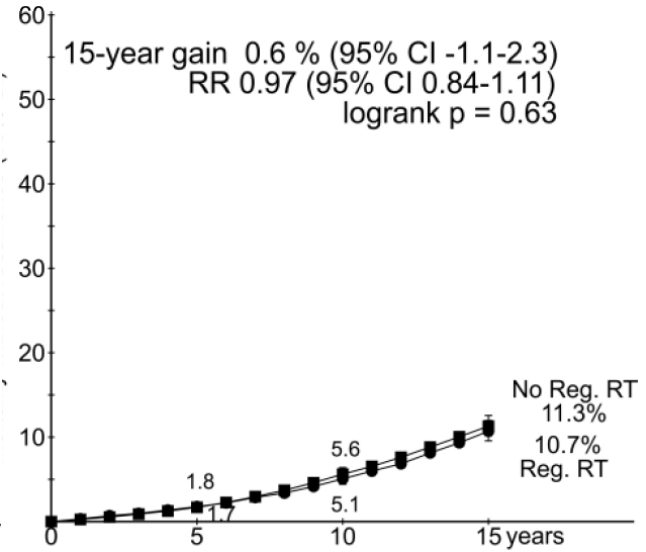
**(a) Any recurrence ( $n=10833$ )**



**(b) Breast cancer mortality ( $n=10833$ )**

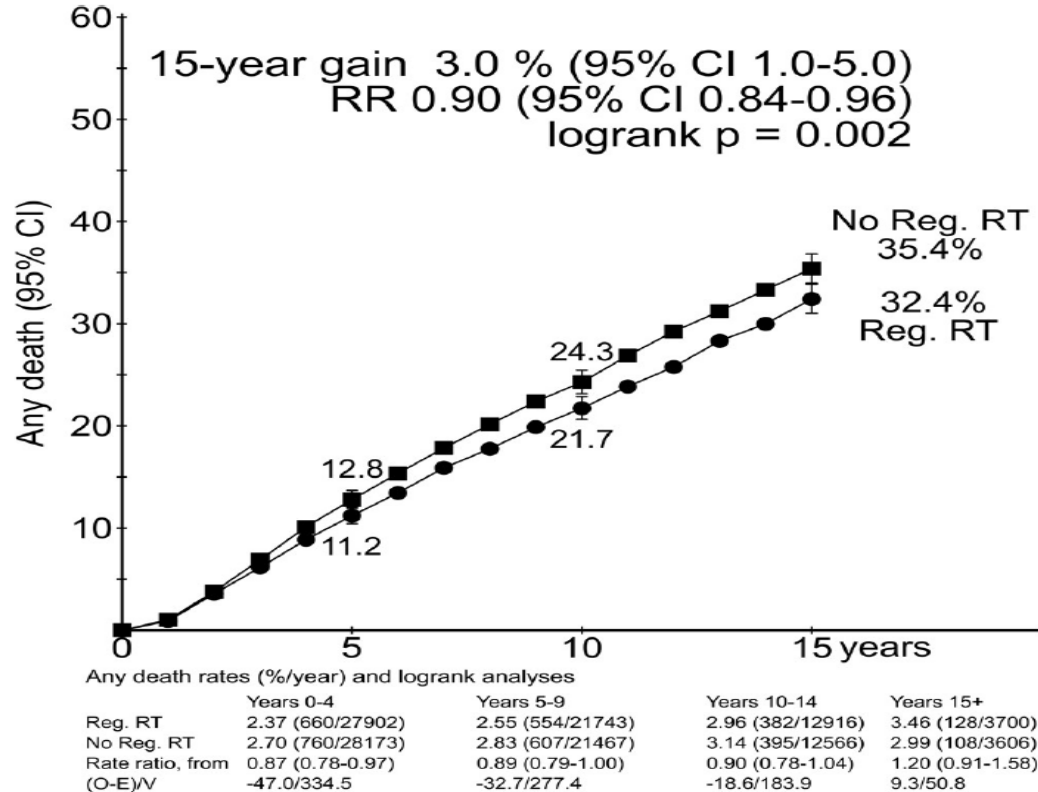


**(c) Non-breast-cancer mortality ( $n=10833$ )**



# RNI for NO-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

**(d) Any death (n=12167)**



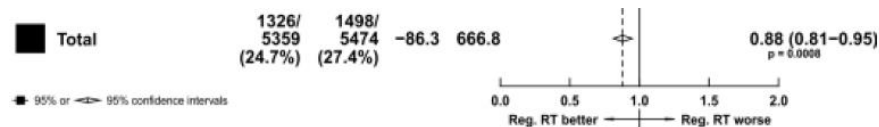
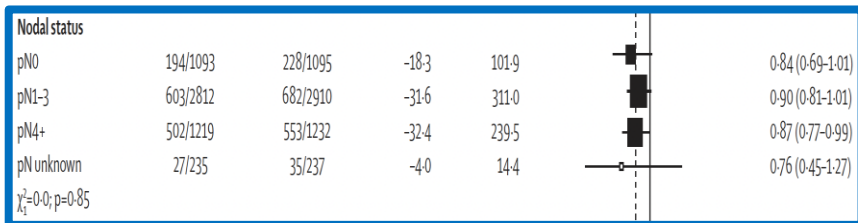
# RNI for NO-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

*Comprehensive regional LN irradiation – pulled together*

*Trials starting after 1989 only*

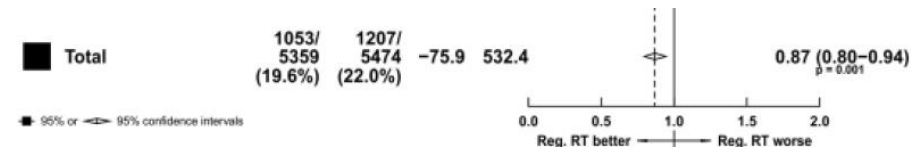
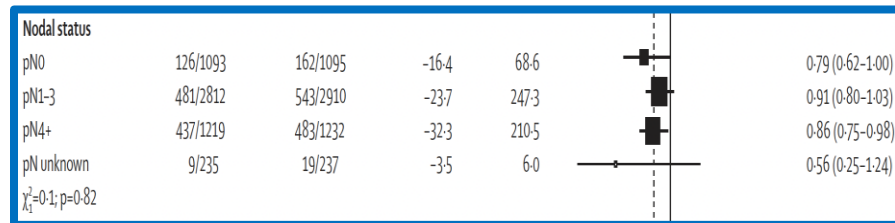
## (a) Any recurrence

Category	Events/Women		Reg. RT events		Ratio of annual event rates Reg. RT : No Reg. RT	Rate Ratio (95% CI)
	Allocated Reg. RT	Allocated No Reg. RT	Logrank O-E	Variance of O-E		



## (b) Breast cancer mortality

Category	Deaths/Women		Reg. RT deaths		Ratio of annual death rates Reg. RT : No Reg. RT	Rate Ratio (95% CI)
	Allocated Reg. RT	Allocated No Reg. RT	Logrank O-E	Variance of O-E		

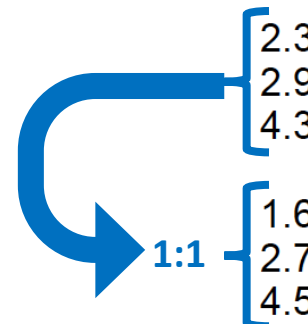


# RNI for N0-disease: *Evidence – from the past*

*Comprehensive regional LN irradiation – pulled together*

*Trials starting after 1989 only*

Outcome	Nodal status	15-year risk		
		Regional RT (%)	No Regional RT (%)	Gain from regional RT (%)
Any recurrence	pN0	19.0	21.3	2.3
	pN1-3	25.6	28.5	
	pN4+	46.8	51.1	
Breast cancer mortality	pN0	10.9	12.5	1.6
	pN1-3	20.3	23.0	
	pN4+	40.5	45.0	





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# RNI for N0-disease: *More recent data*

## Post-Mastectomy Radiation Therapy in Human Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor 2 Positive Breast Cancer Patients: Analysis of the HERA Trial

International Journal of  
Radiation Oncology  
biology • physics

[www.redjournal.org](http://www.redjournal.org)

Joseph Abi Jaoude, MD,\* Evandro de Azambuja, MD,<sup>†</sup> Maha Makki, MS,<sup>‡</sup>  
Hani Tamim, PhD,<sup>§</sup> Arafat Tfayli, MD,<sup>§,||</sup> Fady Geara, MD, PhD,<sup>¶</sup>  
Martine Piccart, MD, PhD,<sup>†</sup> Philip Poortmans, MD,<sup>#</sup>  
and Youssef H. Zeidan, MD, PhD<sup>¶</sup>

### With PMRT in:

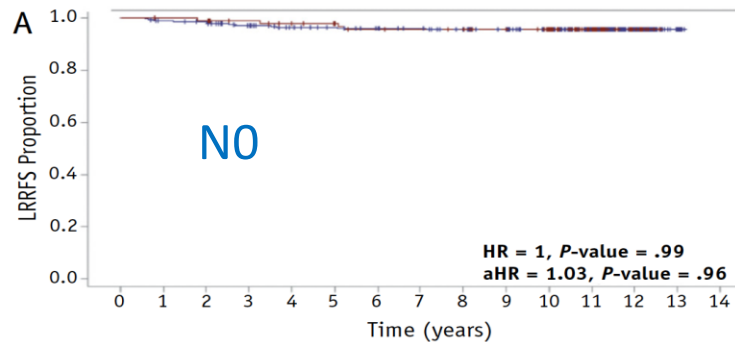
98/488 = 20%

250/517 = 48%

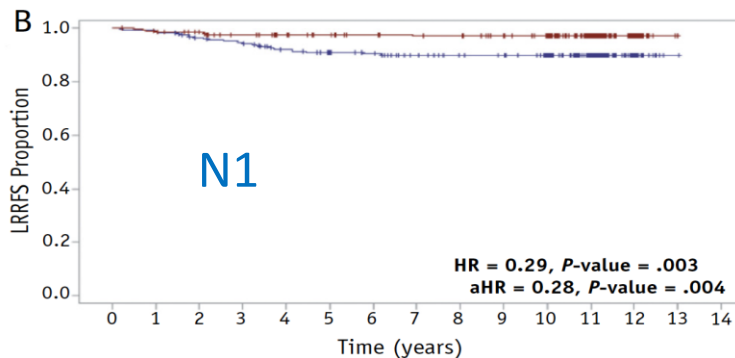
592/628 = 94%

	PMRT (n = 940)	No PMRT (n = 693)	P value
Nodal status, no. (%)			
N0	98 (10.4)	390 (56.3)	<.0001
1-3 positive lymph nodes	250 (26.6)	267 (38.5)	
≥4 positive lymph nodes	592 (63.0)	36 (5.2)	

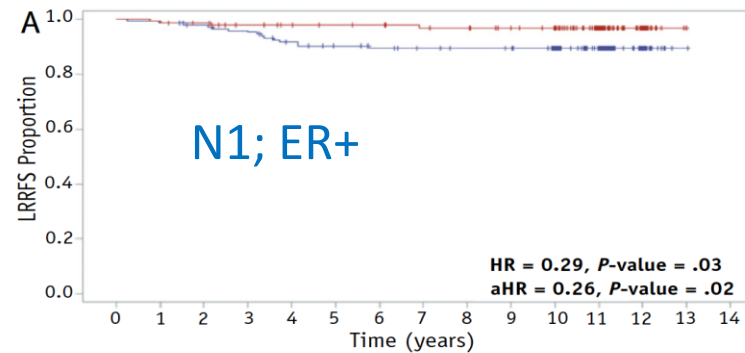
# RNI for N0-disease: *More recent data*



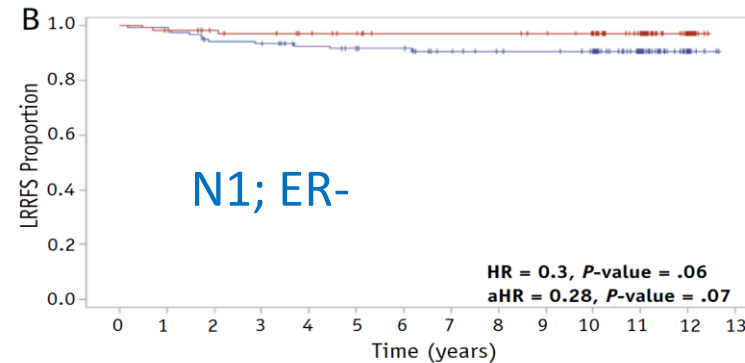
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
No PMRT	390	382	379	364	350	345	340	336	328	321	301	217	70	8	
PMRT	98	97	96	92	89	86	82	81	80	76	71	47	13	0	



	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
No PMRT	267	264	252	248	232	221	216	205	199	197	183	119	35	1	
PMRT	250	245	237	229	223	218	212	209	208	201	193	123	33	0	



	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
No PMRT	145	143	139	134	126	119	116	113	111	110	102	68	20	1	
PMRT	133	132	129	123	120	118	116	113	112	107	102	63	18	0	



	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
No PMRT	119	118	111	110	104	100	98	90	86	85	79	49	14	0	
PMRT	110	107	103	101	98	95	91	91	91	89	86	57	13	0	

# RNI for N0-disease: *More recent data*

Ann Surg Oncol

<https://doi.org/10.1245/s10434-021-10511-2>

Annals of

**SURGICAL ONCOLOGY**

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF SURGICAL ONCOLOGY

ORIGINAL ARTICLE – BREAST ONCOLOGY

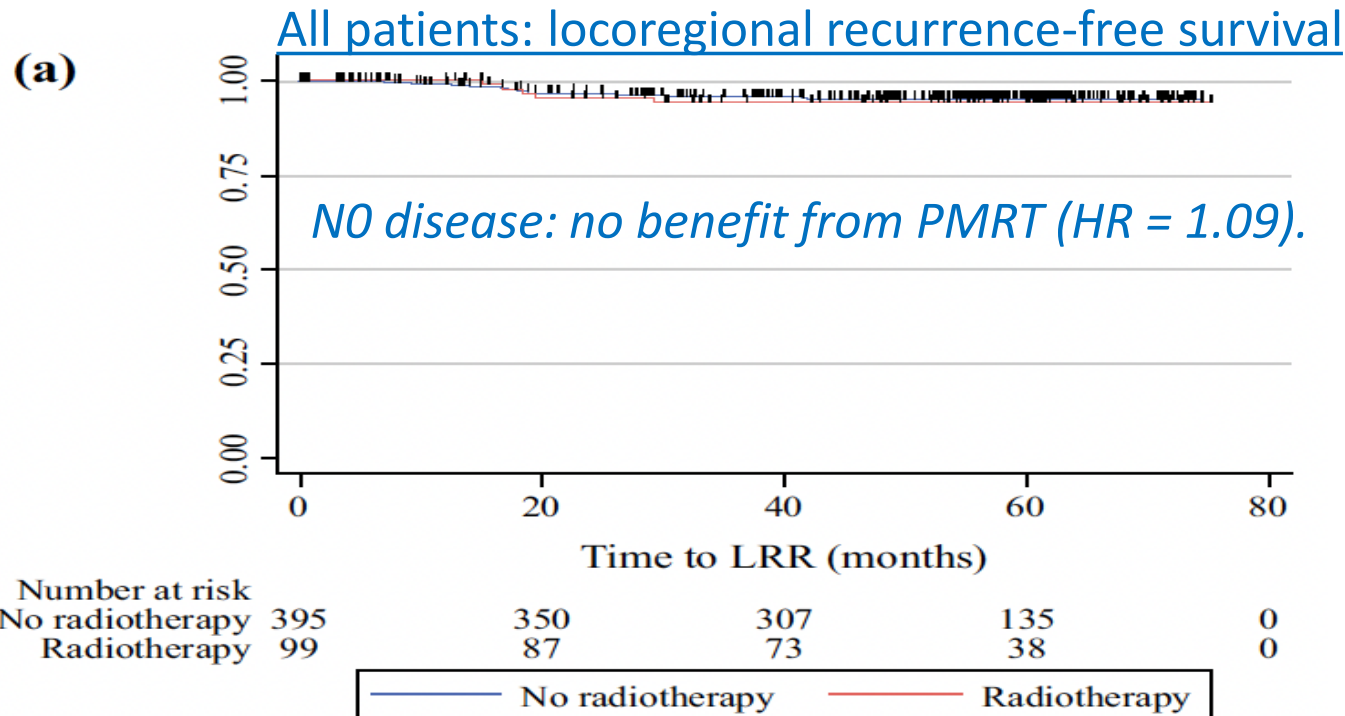
## Post-mastectomy Radiation Therapy in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Patients: Analysis of the BEATRICE Trial

Majd Kayali, MD<sup>1</sup>, Joseph Abi Jaoude, MD<sup>1</sup>, Mohammed Mohammed, MD<sup>1</sup>, Joanne Khabsa, MPH<sup>3</sup>, Arafat Tfayli, MD<sup>4</sup>, Philip Poortmans, MD, PhD<sup>5,6</sup>, and Youssef H. Zeidan, MD, PhD<sup>1,2</sup>

	PMRT ( <i>n</i> = 359)	No PMRT ( <i>n</i> = 581)	<i>p</i> -Value
Nodal status, no. (%)			<u>With PMRT in:</u> < 0.0001
0 positive lymph nodes	99 (27.58)	395 (67.99)	99/494 = 20%
1–3 positive lymph nodes	119 (33.15)	156 (26.85)	119/274 = 43%
≥ 4 positive lymph nodes	141 (39.28)	30 (5.16)	141/171 = 82%

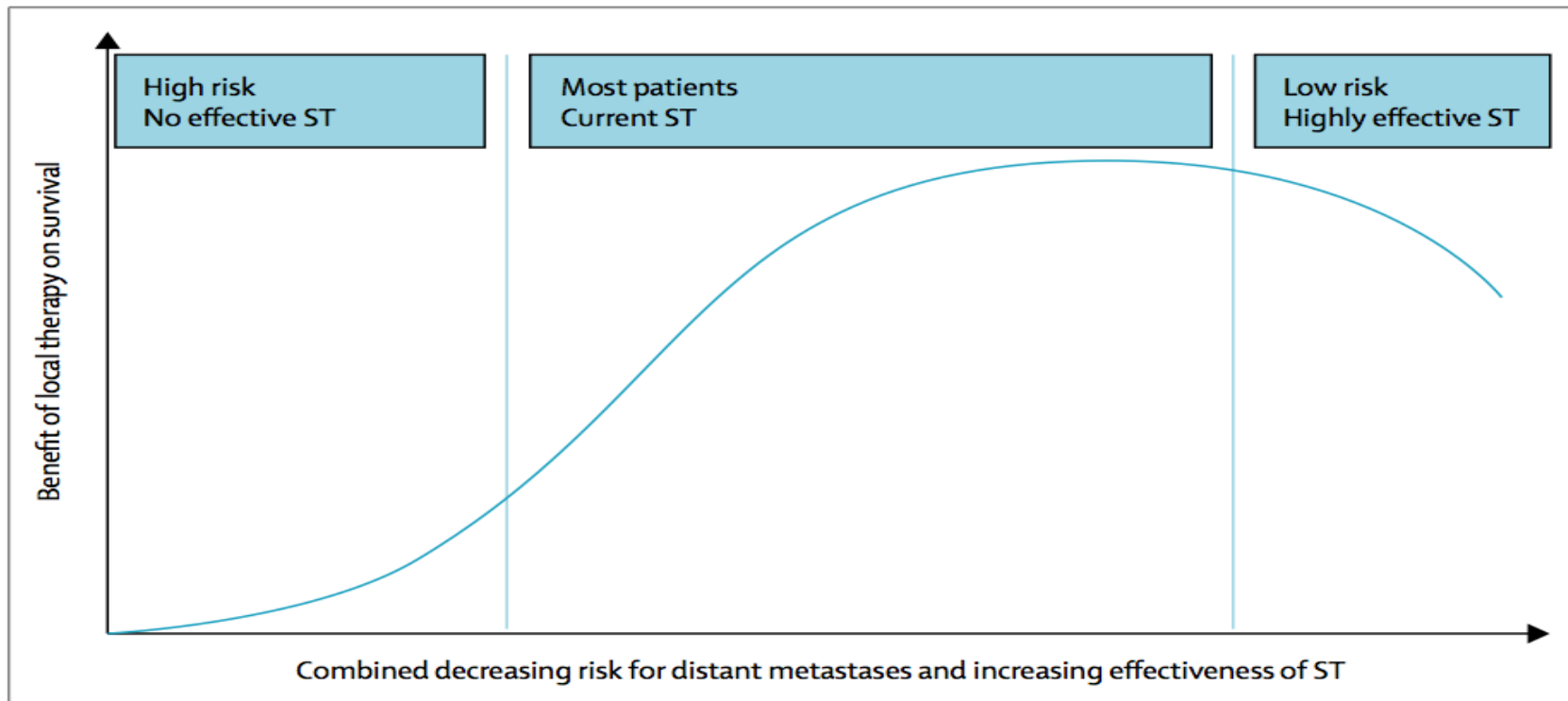
Kayali M, et al. *Ann Surg Oncol*. 2022;29:460-466.

# RNI for N0-disease: *More recent data*



# RNI for NO-disease: *More recent data*

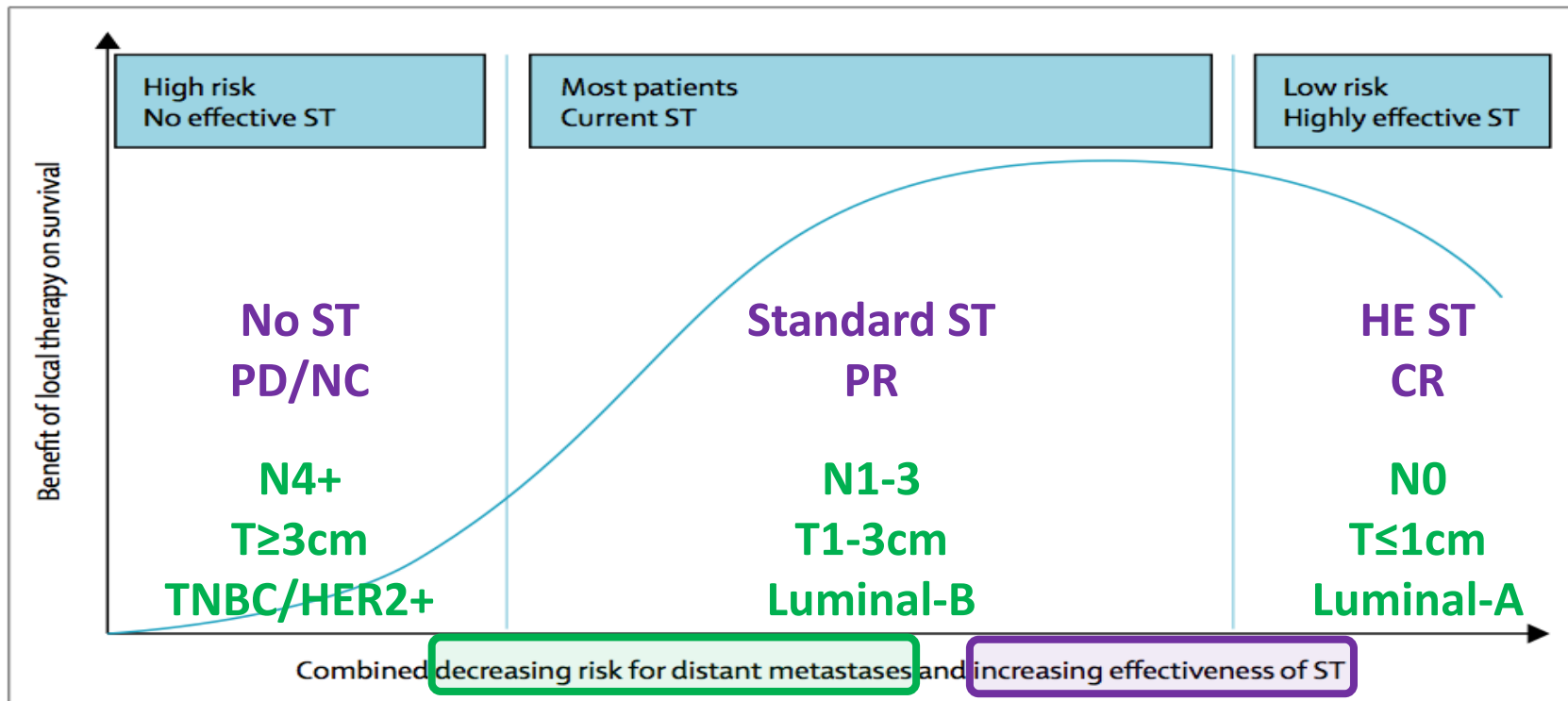
## *Interaction between systemic and locoregional treatments*



**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

# RNI for NO-disease: *More recent data*

## *Interaction between systemic and locoregional treatments*



**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

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# RNI for N0-disease: *What to wait for*

**Table S6. Data available in trials beginning before the year 2009 comparing radiotherapy versus no radiotherapy to the regional nodes**

Characteristic	61H B-03	64E Oslo	69A H'berg	72A WSSA	73C Mayo	73E Milan	74Q P'mont	78B Toron.-Ed.	89* T'pere	91V Lyon	95L IOSG	96T EORTC	00B MA-20	03! DBCG	07H IAEA	08# KROG
<b>Nodal status</b>																
pN0	0	355	75	0	0	0	13	0	195	309	0	1778	177	0	38	0
pN1-3	0	142	0	0	112	43	128	27	34	631	0	1725	1558	1818	283	304
pN4+	0	44	0	0	129	13	0	22	6	392	0	498	97	1271	148	431
pN unknown	748	1	68	217	0	0	19	1	27	2	435	3	0	0	7	0

# RNI for N0-disease: *What to wait for*

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pN1-3	0	142	0	0	112	43	128	27	34	631	0	1725	1558	1818	283	304
pN4+	0	44	0	0	129	13	0	22	6	392	0	498	97	1271	148	431
pN unknown	748	1	68	217	0	0	19	1	27	2	435	3	0	0	7	0

Planned analysis using the data of the  
(data on file!) 20-years analysis →  
focussing on the pN0 patients

# RNI for N0-disease: *What to wait for*

**Table S6. Data available in trials beginning before the year 2009 comparing radiotherapy versus no radiotherapy to the regional nodes**

Characteristic	61H B-03	64E Oslo	69A H'berg	72A WSSA	73C Mayo	73E Milan	74Q P'mont	78B Toron.-Ed.	89* T'pere	91V Lyon	95L IOSG	96T EORTC	00B MA-20	03! DBCG	07H IAEA	08# KROG
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pN unknown	748	1	68	217	0	0	19	1	27	2	435	3	0	0	7	0

DBCG IMN-1 & IMN-2 studies: included ~ 300-400

T3N0 patients → will be analysed separately

*Personal communication Birgitte Offersen*

# RNI for NO-disease: *What to wait for* *XX<sup>th</sup> century*



ONE SIZE  
FITS ALL

# RNI for NO-disease: *What to wait for*

\*Philip Poortmans, Orit Kaidar-Person, Paul Span

*Lancet Oncol* 2016

Published Online  
December 16, 2016  
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/  
S1470-2045\(16\)30660-X](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(16)30660-X)

Comment

Radiation oncology enters the era of individualised medicine

\*Orit Kaidar-Person, Philip Poortmans, Roberto Salgado

*Lancet Oncol* 2020

Published Online  
August 4, 2021  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/  
S1470-2045\(21\)00411-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(21)00411-3)

Comment

Genomic-adjusted radiation dose to personalise radiotherapy

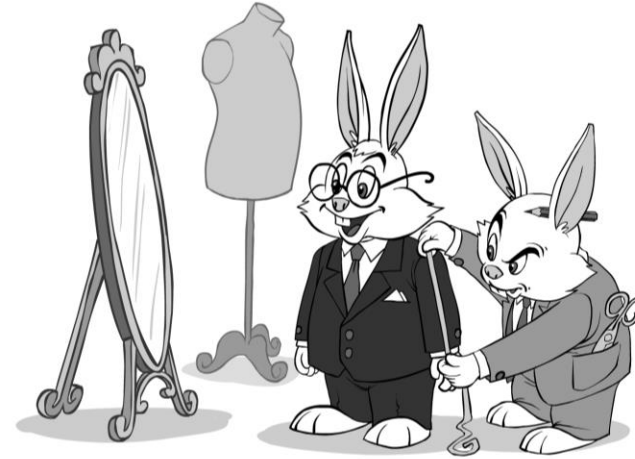


# RNI for NO-disease: *What to wait for*

*XX<sup>th</sup> century* *XXI<sup>st</sup> century*

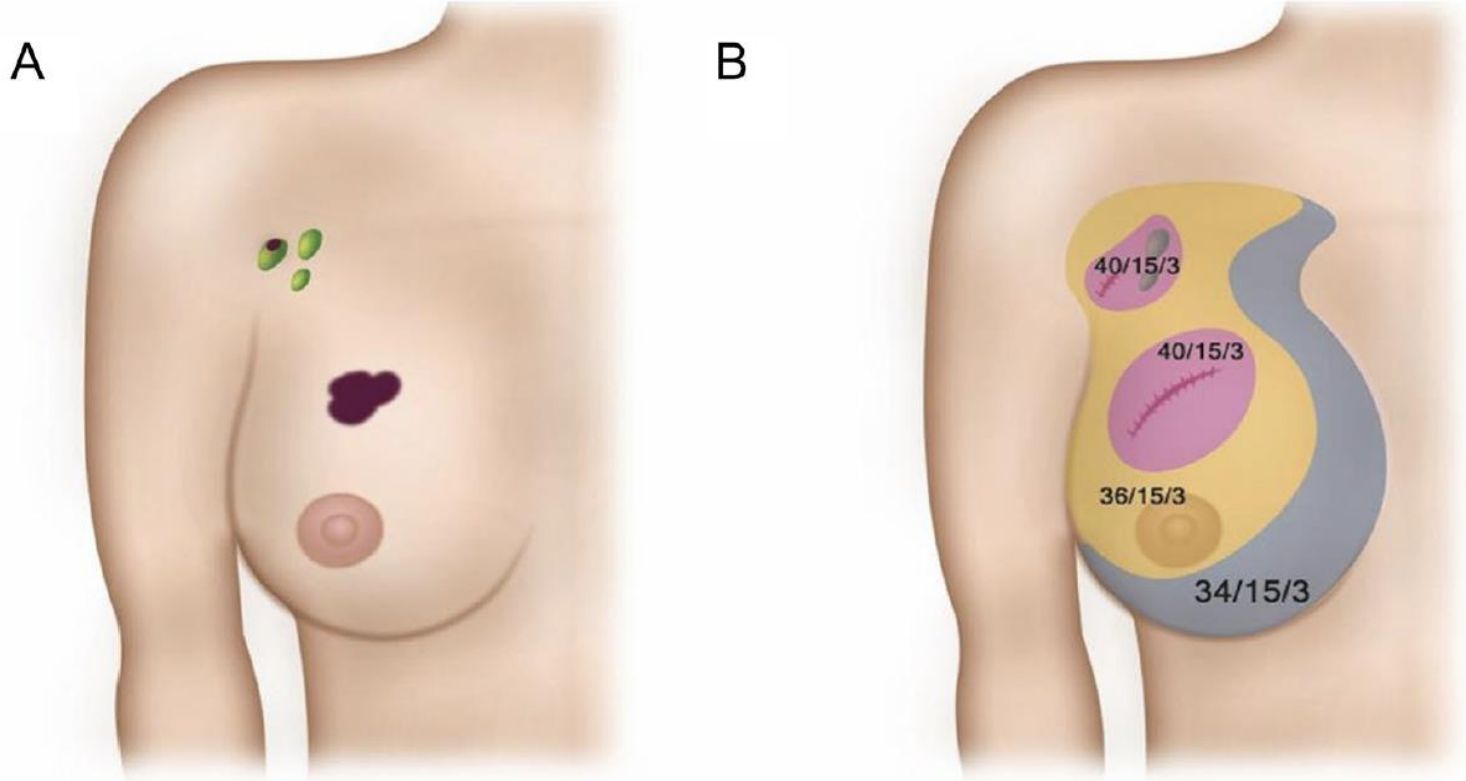


ONE SIZE  
FITS ALL



MADE TO  
MEASURE

# RNI for N0-disease: *What to wait for*



*Alon Person*

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# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

The Breast 31 (2017) 295–302



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

The Breast

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/brst](http://www.elsevier.com/brst)



Original article

## Over-irradiation

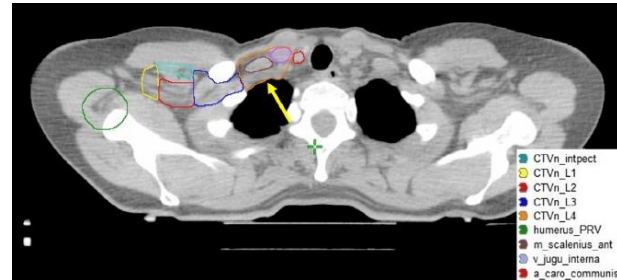
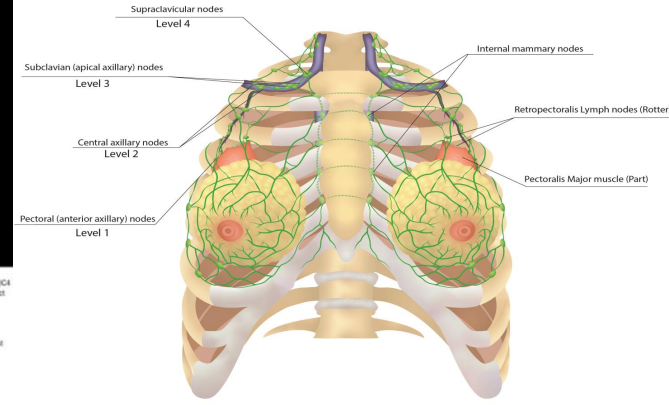
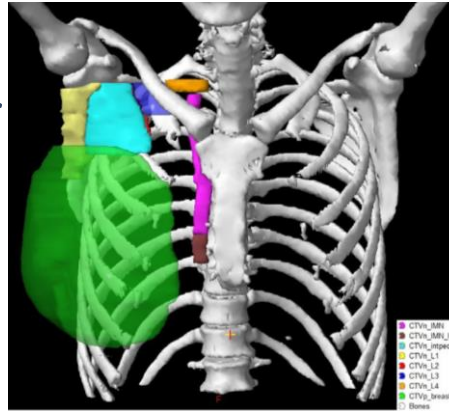
Philip M.P. Poortmans<sup>a,\*</sup>, Meritxell Arenas<sup>b</sup>, Lorenzo Livi<sup>c</sup>



# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

*Transition 20<sup>th</sup> ➔ 21<sup>st</sup> century*

- *Number of target volumes*
- *Size of target volumes*
- *Dose*
- *Number of fractions*

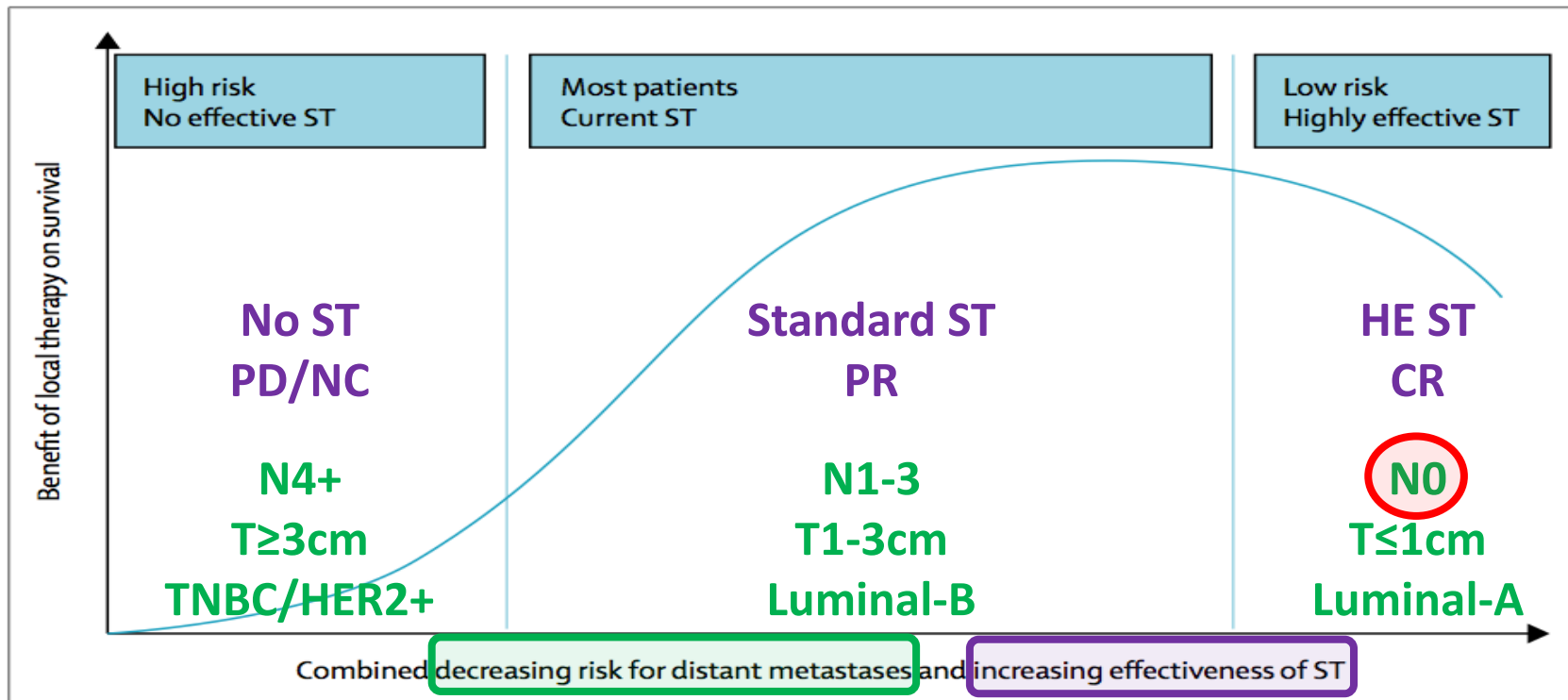


# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

- ✓ *Elective nodal irradiation improves DFS for N0 patients in the presence of risk factors and/or in case of central/medial location.*
- ✓ *Absolute benefit depends on the absolute recurrence risks in combination with the effectiveness of systemic therapy.*
- ✓ *The side effects of RT delivered with contemporary techniques are very limited.*

# RNI for NO-disease: *Take home messages*

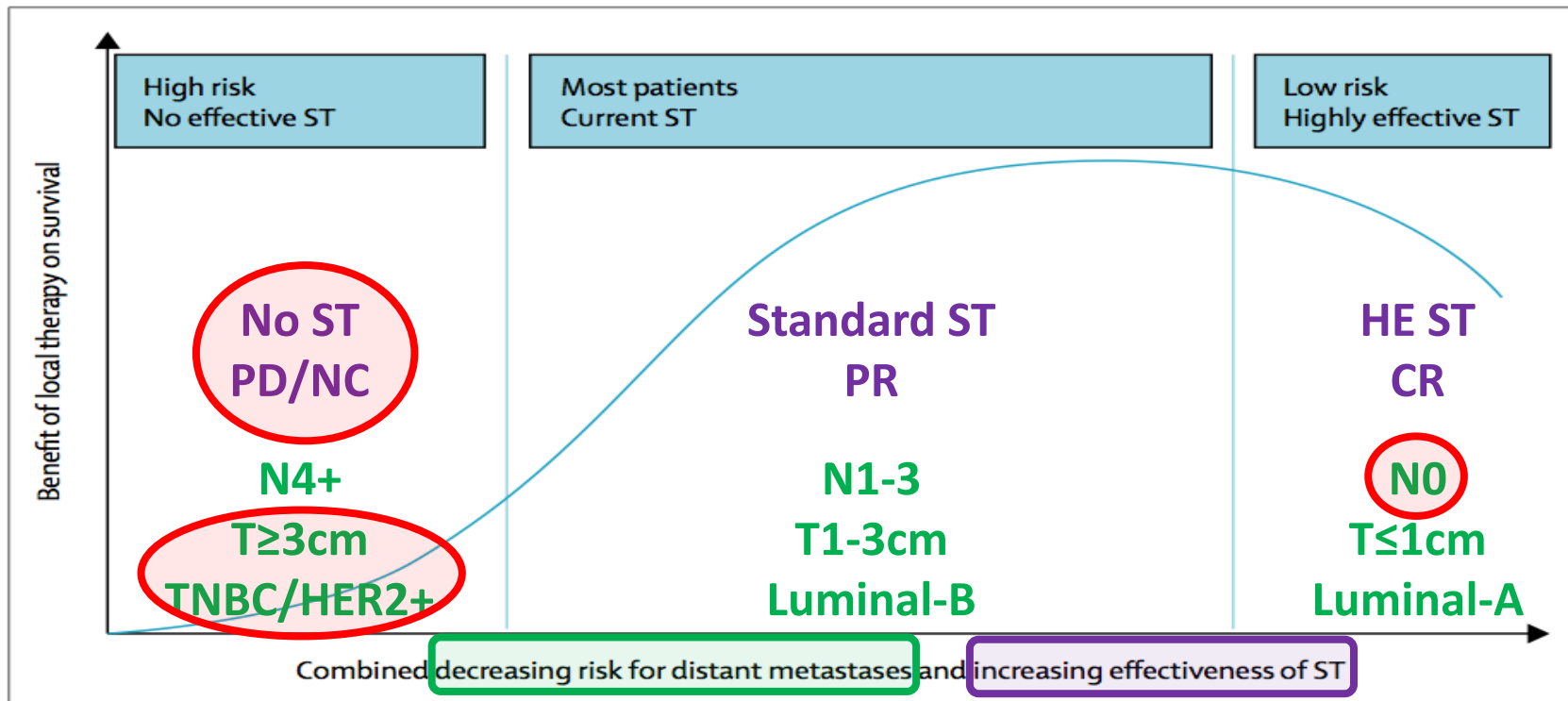
## *Interaction between systemic and locoregional treatments*



**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

# RNI for NO-disease: *Take home messages*

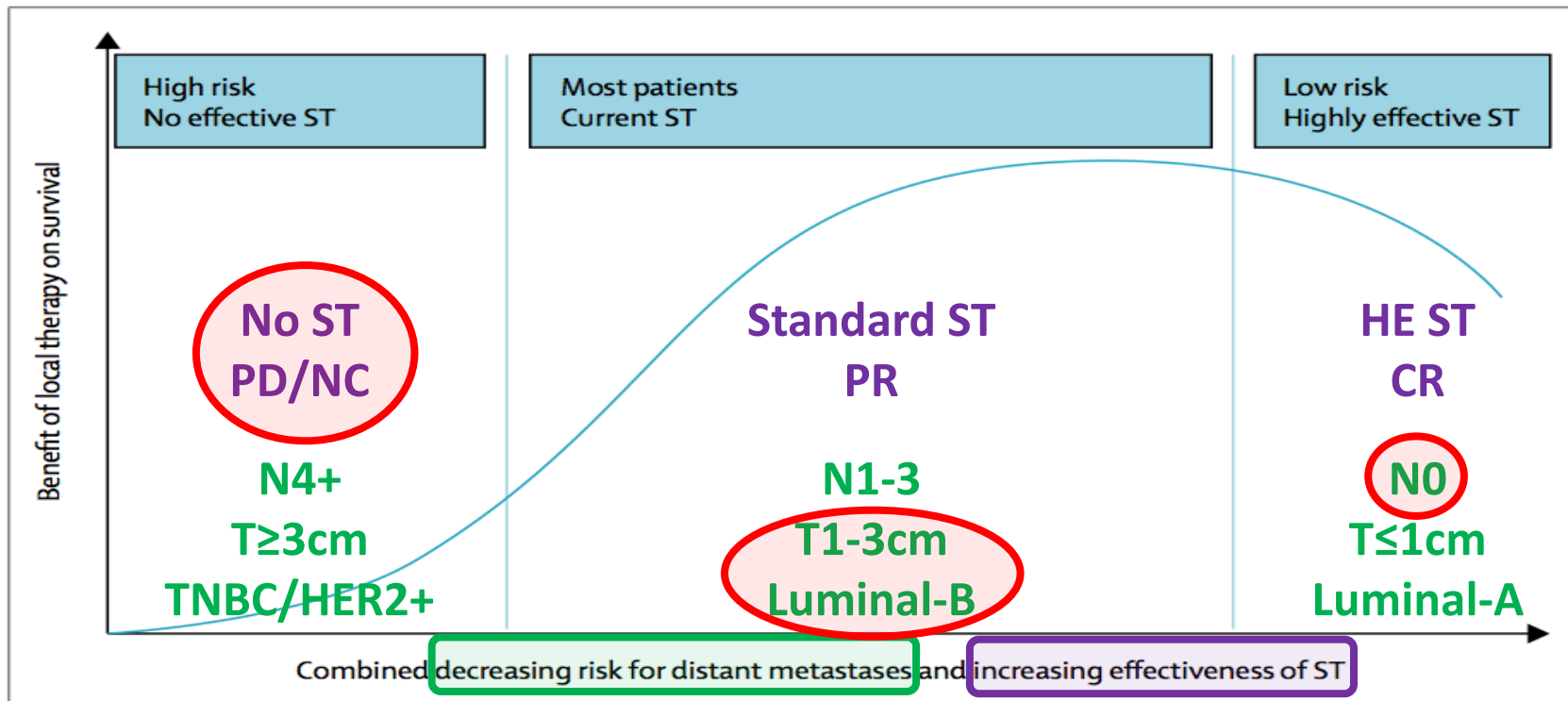
## *Interaction between systemic and locoregional treatments*



**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

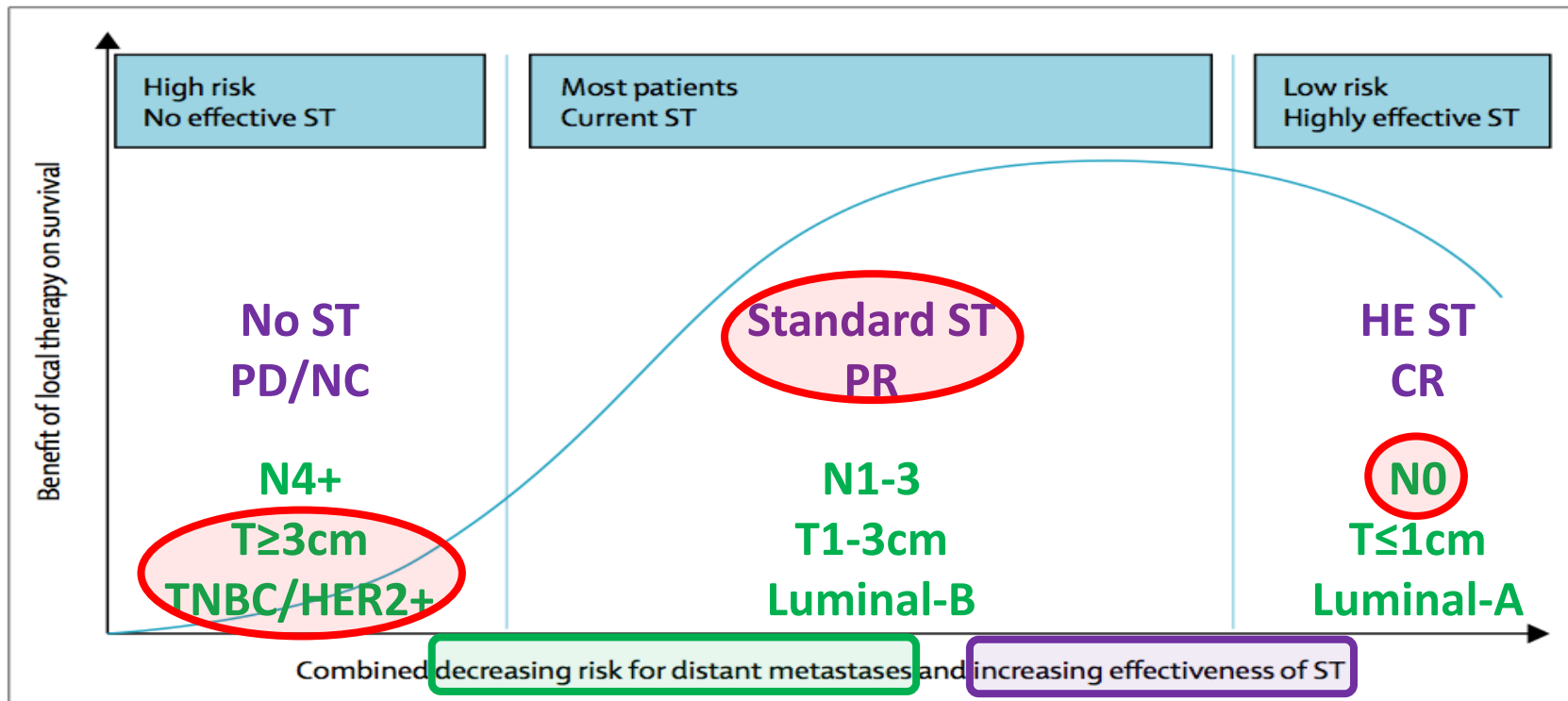
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**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

## *Interaction between systemic and locoregional treatments*



**Figure:** Combined hypothetical benefit of local tumour control on survival with increasing effectiveness of systemic therapy (ST) and decreasing risk of distant metastases of the primary tumour

# RNI for N0-disease: *Take home messages*

## What would you do for:

- Pre-MP woman, aged 43
- TNBC cT2G3N0M0, 3 cm upper-lower quadrant
- PST with good clinical response
- Lumpectomy and SLNB: ypT1aN0 – zone of fibrotic response of 2.8cm (R0)



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*Why not: WBI + treatment planning for IM and axilla levels 3-4?*

*Low heart- & lung dose → RNI*

*High heart- & lung dose → ~~RNI~~*

# RNI for NO-disease: *Acknowledgements*

*Too many to list...*

*... risking forgetting people...*

Orit Kaidar-Person · Icro Meattini · Philip Poortmans *Editors*

## Breast Cancer Radiation Therapy

A Practical Guide for Technical Applications

The book provides, in a comprehensive yet concise way, essential information to improve the knowledge and skills of all healthcare providers involved in the treatment of patients with breast cancer. The content does not focus on general information that is widely available via different sources, but on technical aspects – “hands-on” daily practices and principles of radiation oncology that are not included in other books. Drawing on information taught in courses at e.g. the ESTRO School, as well as the authors' broad clinical experience, the respective contributions reflect and share the expertise of leading experts in breast cancer radiation therapy, supported by sound data and evidence. Each chapter includes a short introduction summarizing the evidence in the literature and “pearls” (a short bullet-point summary), and is enriched by tables, figures and illustrations to provide a concise, easy-to-follow and appealing overview.

The book, containing also useful electronic supplementary material, will be of interest to a wide range of readers, including radiation oncologists, radiation technicians, medical physicists, and others involved in breast cancer care.



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Kaidar-Person · Meattini · Poortmans *Eds.*



Breast Cancer Radiation Therapy

# Breast Cancer Radiation Therapy

A Practical Guide for Technical  
Applications

Orit Kaidar-Person  
Icro Meattini  
Philip Poortmans  
*Editors*

 Springer