

# Three-year Survival of Women with Breast Cancer in Basrah, Iraq

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Dear Editor,

We read with great interest the original article entitled “Three-year survival of women with breast cancer in Basrah, Iraq” published in the July 2020 issue of the *Oman Medical Journal* by Al-Asadi et al,<sup>1</sup> which was the first article to assess the survival rate of breast cancer in Basrah, Iraq. We found the article very informative as it highlighted the prognostication. However, we are hopeful that an extension study can be initiated for this cohort as most studies use a five-year rather than mere three-year survival rate.

The article concluded that late-stage and tumor grade were associated with poorer survival; however, certain prognostic factors such as hormonal receptors, socioeconomic status, and educational level were unfortunately missing. We believe that limited knowledge and low breast self-examination practices also will provide a similar outcome.<sup>2</sup> This will, in turn, cause delays in diagnosis, leading to late-

stage presentation and poor survival rate, as was observed in this study.

Delay in cancer diagnosis and treatment can occur at any level, including patients and physicians who do not recognize cancer symptoms or act on them in time. Therefore, media messages for community awareness should increase public knowledge of cancer symptoms and the importance of seeking timely medical attention. Meanwhile, physicians should also be regularly updated on recognizing cancer, related guidelines, continuity of care, and prompt access to specialist care.<sup>3</sup>

## REFERENCES

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