

## Intramammary lymph nodes in breast cancer

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Intramammary lymph node (IMLN) in breast cancer is under estimated. Pathological aspects were not commonly reported. Its impact on breast cancer management is controversial.

**Methods:** We report four cases of primary breast cancer presenting with IMLN treated at the radiation oncology department of Salah Azaiz Institut. We analyze the clinical profile, the prognostic significance and the appropriate management through a literature research.

**Results:** The mean age at the time of diagnosis was 59 years and they were all women. IMLN were seen on mammography and ultrasonography in three cases. IMLN was discovered incidentally during histopathology assessment in the fourth case. They were located in the same quadrant as the tumor in three cases. Three patients had metastasis within the IMLN and with capsula infraction in one case. Two of them had additional metastases in the axillary nodes. One patient had eight positive IMLN with negative axillary node. Three patients had a mastectomy while one patient had breast conservation surgery. They all had adjuvant chemotherapy and radiotherapy. One patient was lost from follow-up. The three others were disease free at last follow-up.

**Conclusion:** The incidence of IMLN, in breast cancer, is variable and their existence is not commonly assessed. Whether IMLN should be considered as an in-transit node in breast draining system is still controversial. Further studies on lymphatic mapping would answer to this question. IMLN involvement should be considered as a poor prognostic factor that requires an adequate adjuvant treatment.