

# Best Practice in Radiation Oncology and Novel Therapeutic Approaches: An Annual Update

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS  
CANCER CENTER



## Management of Regional Lymph Nodes in Breast Cancer

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# Disclosures

- No industry-related disclosures relevant to this presentation
- Research disclosures:
  - NRG NSABP B51 RTOG1340: Co PI
  - BCRF Grant NSABP Foundation for NRG RTOG 1005: Co-PI

# Key Take-aways: Radiation Management of Regional Lymph Nodes in Breast Cancer

- When surgery is first line of therapy – most ( but not all) node positive breast patients benefit from regional nodal irradiation (RNI).
- When neoadjuvant systemic therapy is the first line of treatment – RNI can be omitted when clinical cN1 Breast Cancer at diagnosis that is down staged to pathologically node negative (ypN0)
- Moderate hypofractionation is safe and effective for delivery of RNI

# In the Adjuvant Systemic Therapy Setting:

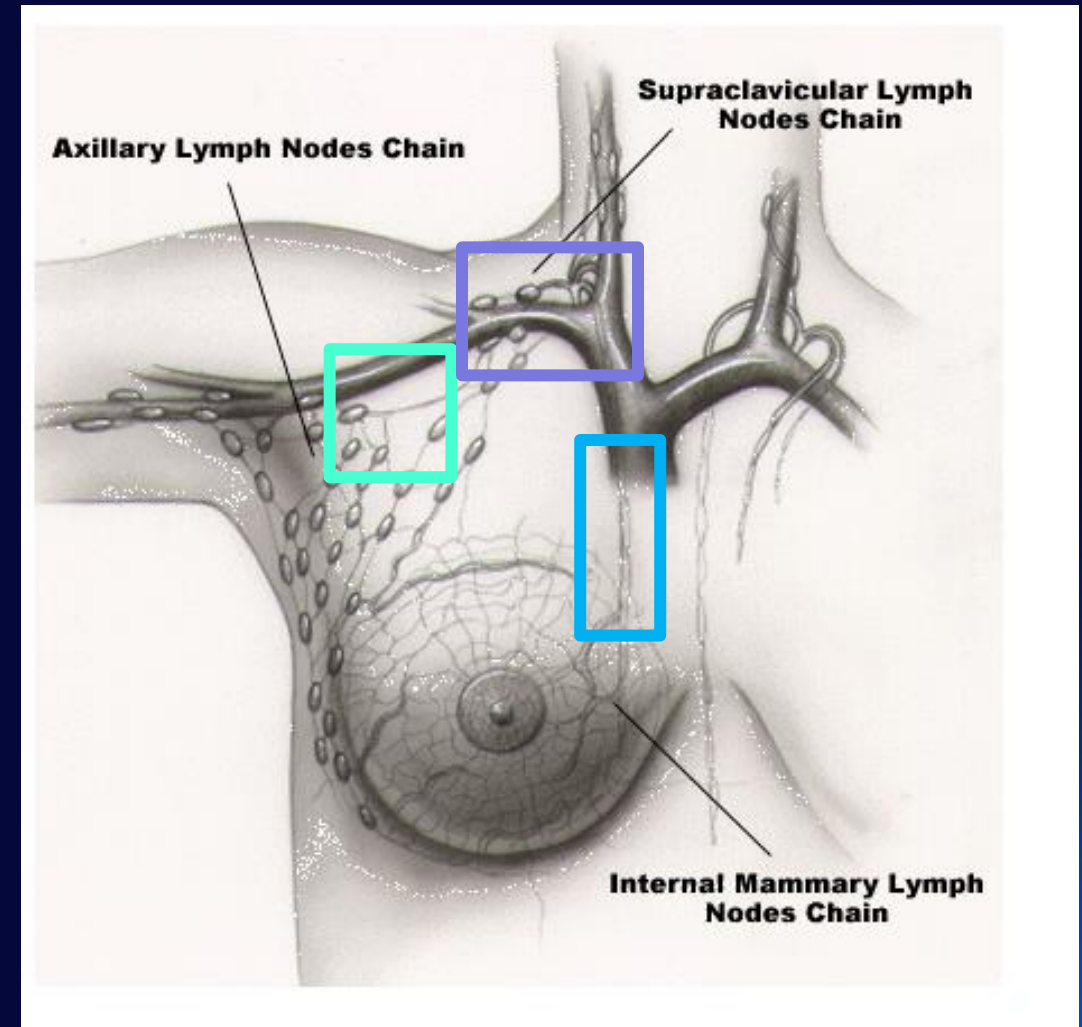
Modern evidence supports that regional nodal irradiation is indicated for T1-2 breast cancer with metastases to 1-3 (N1) axillary nodes

- ▶ 2014: EBCTCG meta-analysis PMRT
- ▶ 2015: NCIC MA.20 phase 3 clinical trial 10 yr
- ▶ 2015: EORTC 22922/10925 phase 3 clinical trial 10 yr
- ▶ 2016: DBCG IMN prospective trial
- ▶ 2021: EORTC 22922/10925 phase 3 clinical trial 15 yr
- ▶ 2023: EBCTCG meta-analysis RNI

# Regional Nodal Irradiation Targets in Modern Radiation Therapy Trials

## Regional nodes:

- **Axilla:** what did not get removed with SN biopsy or dissection, “undissected” or “retained” axilla
- Supraclavicular
- **Internal mammary:** first 3 to 4 intercostal spaces



# Modern Regional Nodal Irradiation (RNI) Trials

## Improved 10 yr. Local Regional Control, Distant DFS, DFS

Trial	n	% N1	Local Reg. Recurrence			Distant Disease Free			Disease Free Surv.		
			No RNI	RNI	p	No RNI	RNI	p	No RNI	RNI	p
<b>NCIC MA.20</b>	1832	85	6.8%	4.3%	.009	82.4%	86.3%	.03	77%	82%	.01
<b>EORTC 22922<sup>10y</sup></b>	4004	43	9.5%	8.3%		75%	78%	.02	69.1%	72.1%	.04

↓ 1.9%

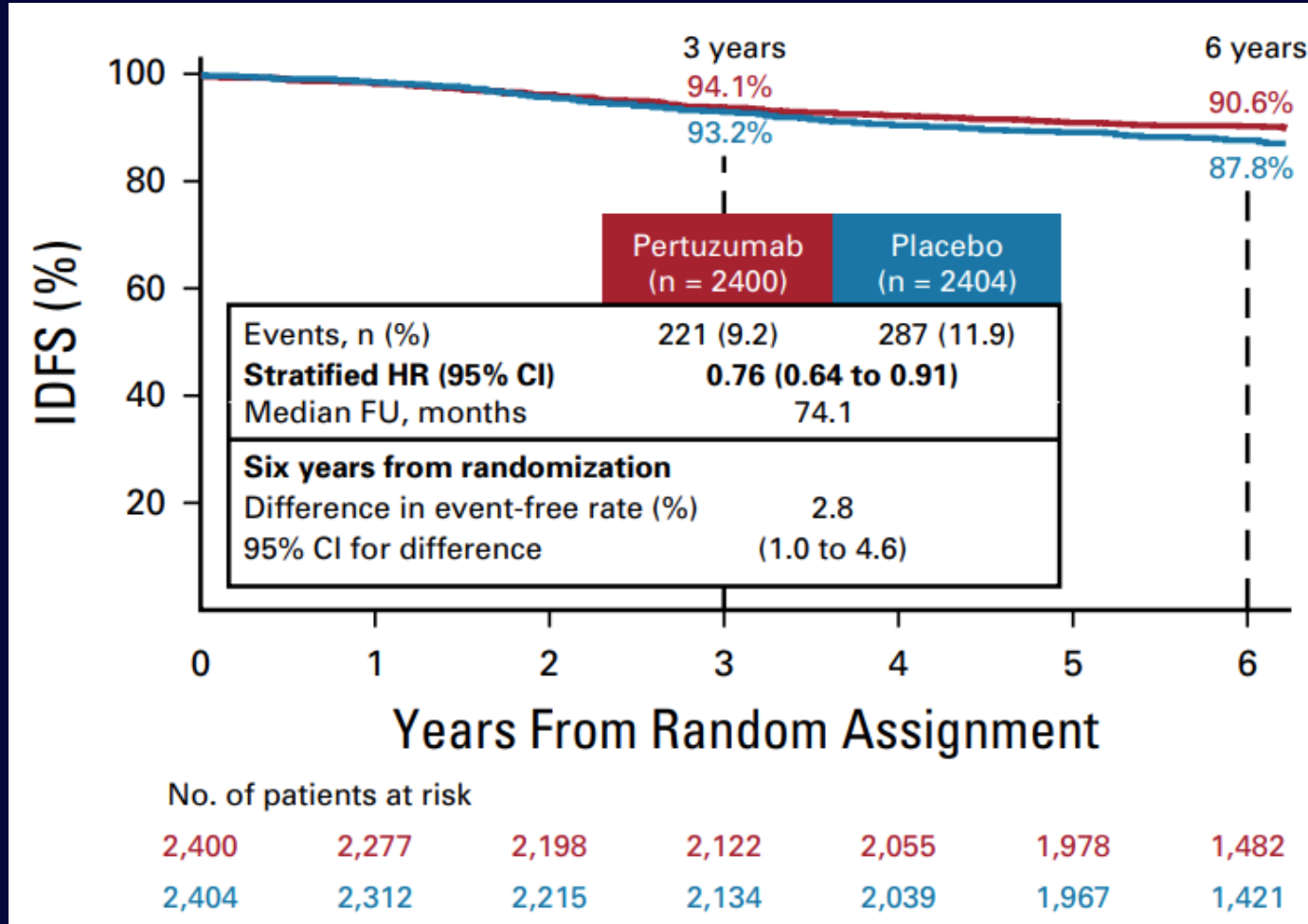
↑ 3.4 %

↑ 4 %

*Whelan et al. NEJM 2015;373(19):1878-1879*

*Poortmans et al, NEJM 373: (4):317-327 2015*

# APHINITY: Difference in Invasive Disease-Free Survival at 6 Years is 2.8% Overall and 4.5% for N+

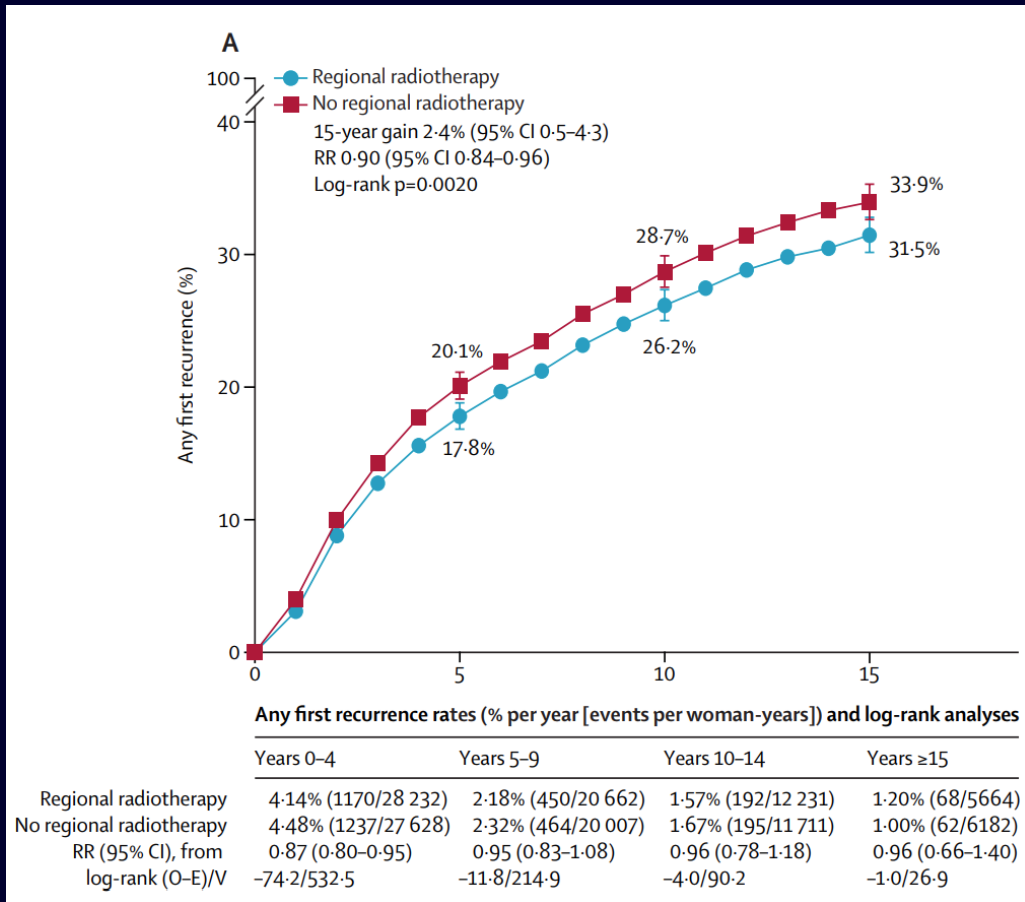


# EBCTCG Meta analysis 2023: Regional Nodal Irradiation

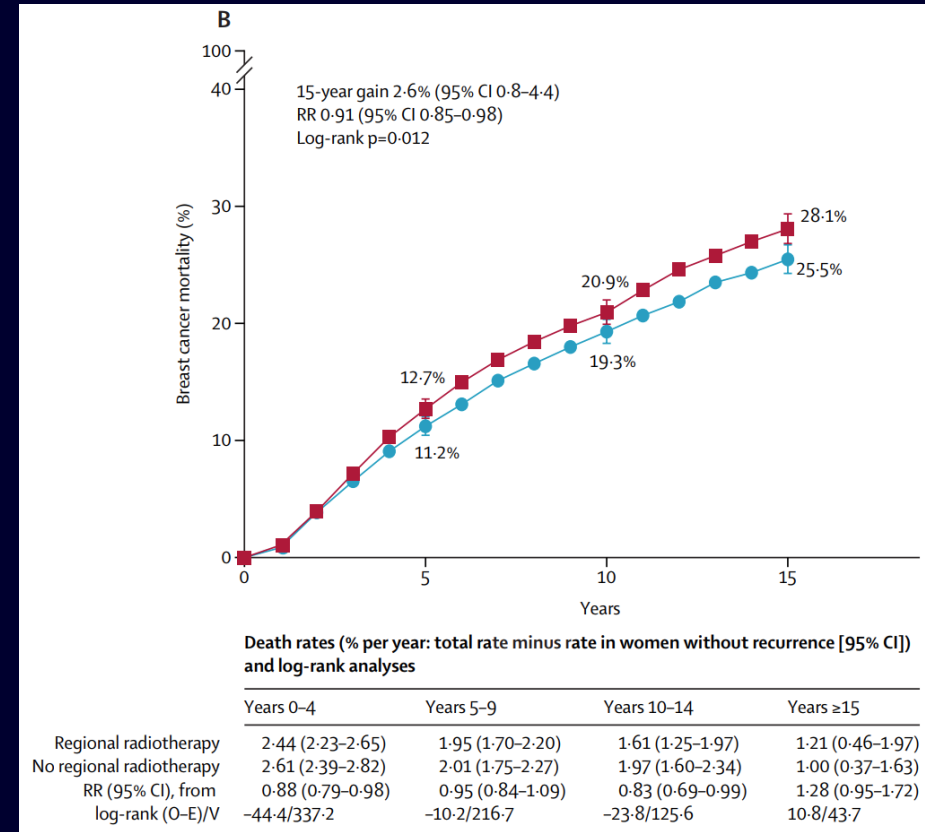
- 1961- 2008:
    - 17 eligible trials, 16 with data
  - 1998-2008: 8 newer trials,
  - n= 12167 → Effects of radiotherapy vs no radiotherapy to lymph node regions including:
    - Some or all of the internal mammary chain,
    - Supraclavicular fossa
    - Axilla (node levels 1–4)
  - Trials Categorized by Era
    - 1961-1978 Older trials
    - 1998 – 2008 Newer trials
- Main endpoint: time to first breast cancer recurrence at any site (ie, locoregional recurrence, newly incident ipsilateral disease, or distant metastasis)
  - Stratification: trial, year of follow up, age at entry, Nodal status (pN0, p1-3+, pn 4+), clinical nodal status used pwehn path status unavailable
  - **Median follow up:**
    - All 14 years
    - Older trials: 25.4 years
    - New trials: 13.7 years

# EBCTCG Meta analysis 2023

## RNI Effect in All Trials 1961-2008



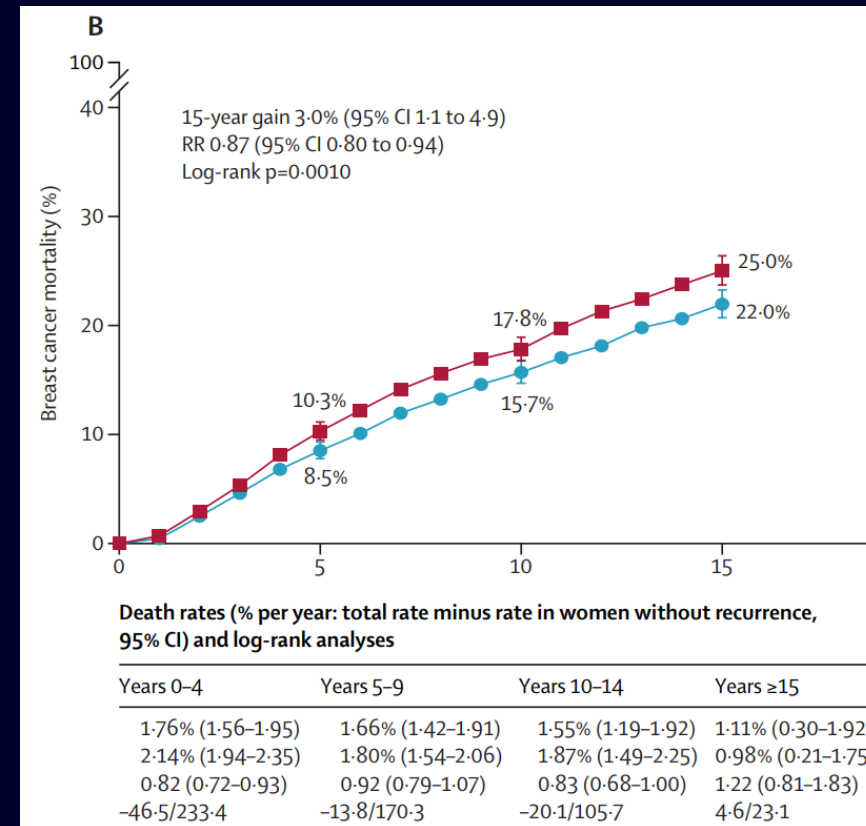
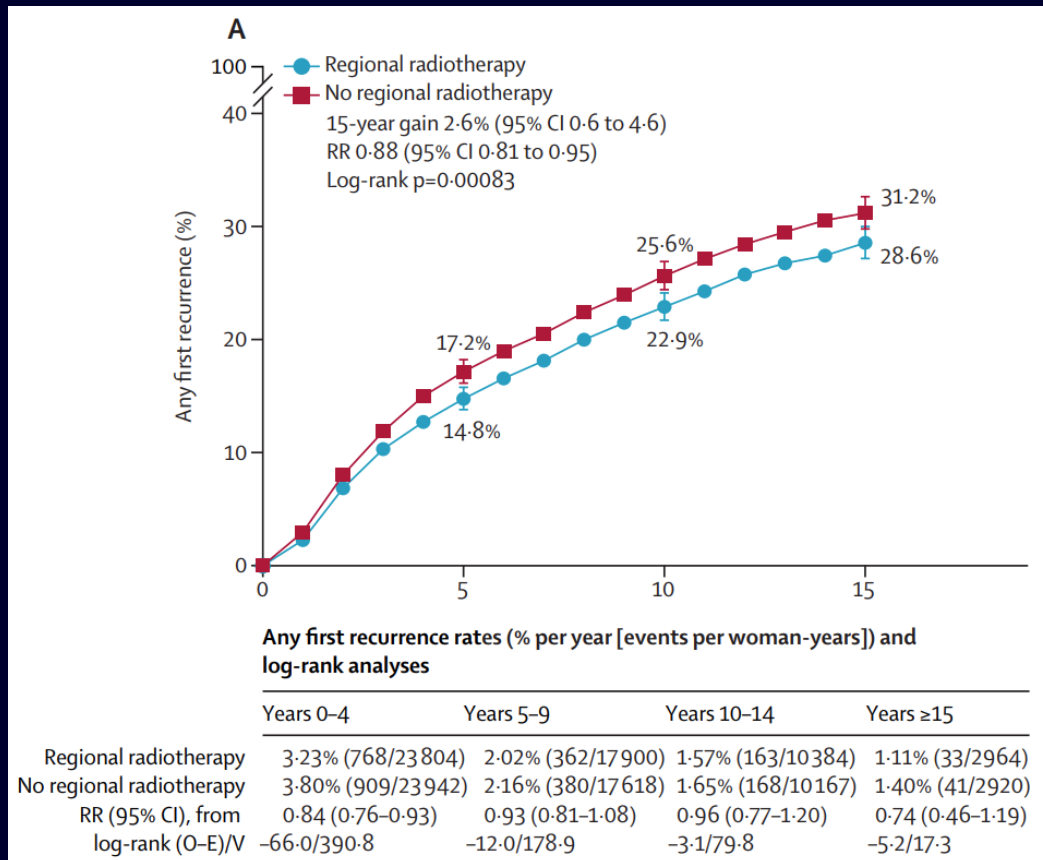
33.9% **No RNI**  
31.5% **RNI** (p<0.002)  
 2.4% Gain 15 year  
**Overall Control**



28.1% **No RNI**  
25.5% **RNI** (p<0.001)  
 2.6% Improvement  
 15 year **Survival**



# EBCTCG 2023: RNI Effect in New Trials 1998-2008



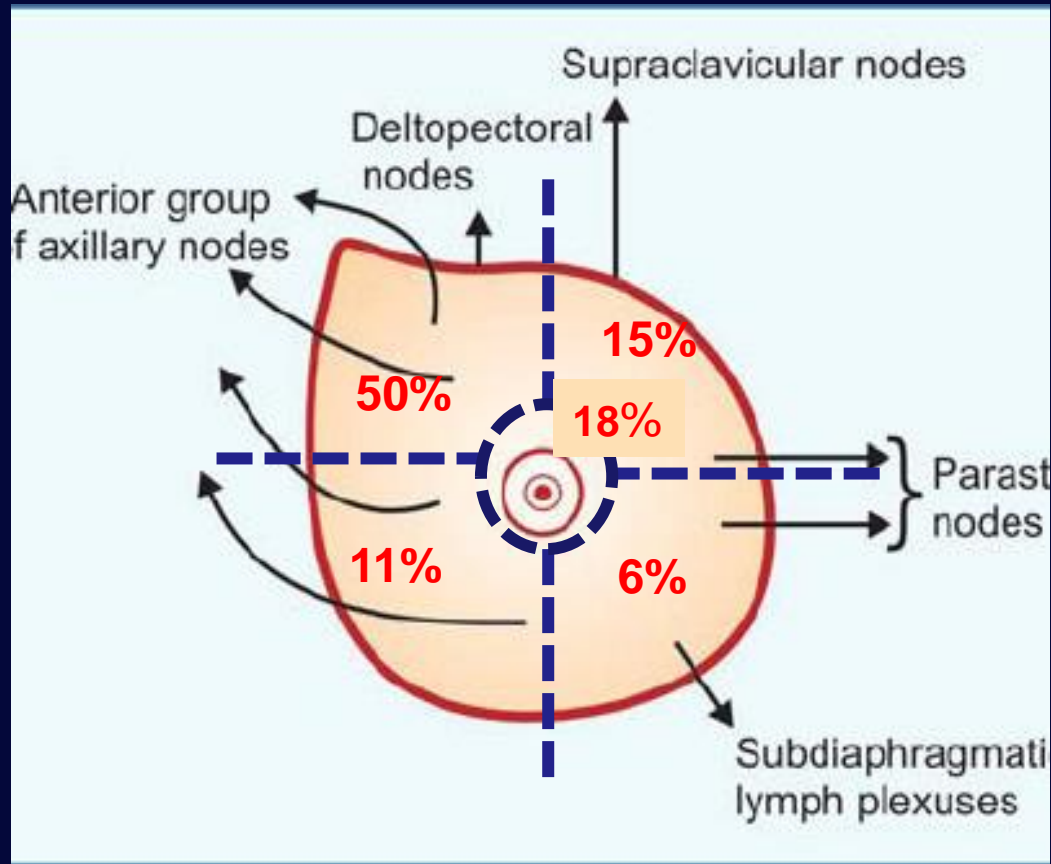
31.2% **No RNI**  
 28.6% **RNI** (p<0.00083)  
 2.6% Gain 15 year  
**Overall Control**

25% **No RNI**  
 22% **RNI** (p<0.001)  
 3% Improvement 15  
 year **Survival**

# EBCTCG 2023: Absolute Benefits of RNI

	Regional radiotherapy	No regional radiotherapy	Gain from regional radiotherapy
<b>Any recurrence</b>			
pN0	19.0%	21.3%	2.3%
pN1-3	25.6%	28.5%	2.9%
pN4+	46.8%	51.1%	4.3%
<b>Breast cancer mortality</b>			
pN0	10.9%	12.5%	1.6%
pN1-3	20.3%	23.0%	2.7%
pN4+	40.5%	45.0%	4.5%

# EBCTCG 2023 Meta-analysis T1-T3, N0: RNI Benefit?



Location!  
Location!  
Location!

Nodal Drainage and Breast Cancer  
Incidence by Quadrant

# N1 microscopic

## What is the Radiation Management?

- N= 468 with N1 Breast Cancer
- Mastectomy
- OSU 2001 -2013
- Micro metastasis n=90 (19%)
  - SNB 30%
  - AND 70%
- No PMRT
- Median follow up: 6.3 years

6 Year Outcome for N1 Breast Cancer				
	LRR	DM	DFS	OS
MacroMet	5%	9%	81.8%	86.4%
<b>MicroMet</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>96.5%</b>
p	0.143	0.368	0.065	0.09

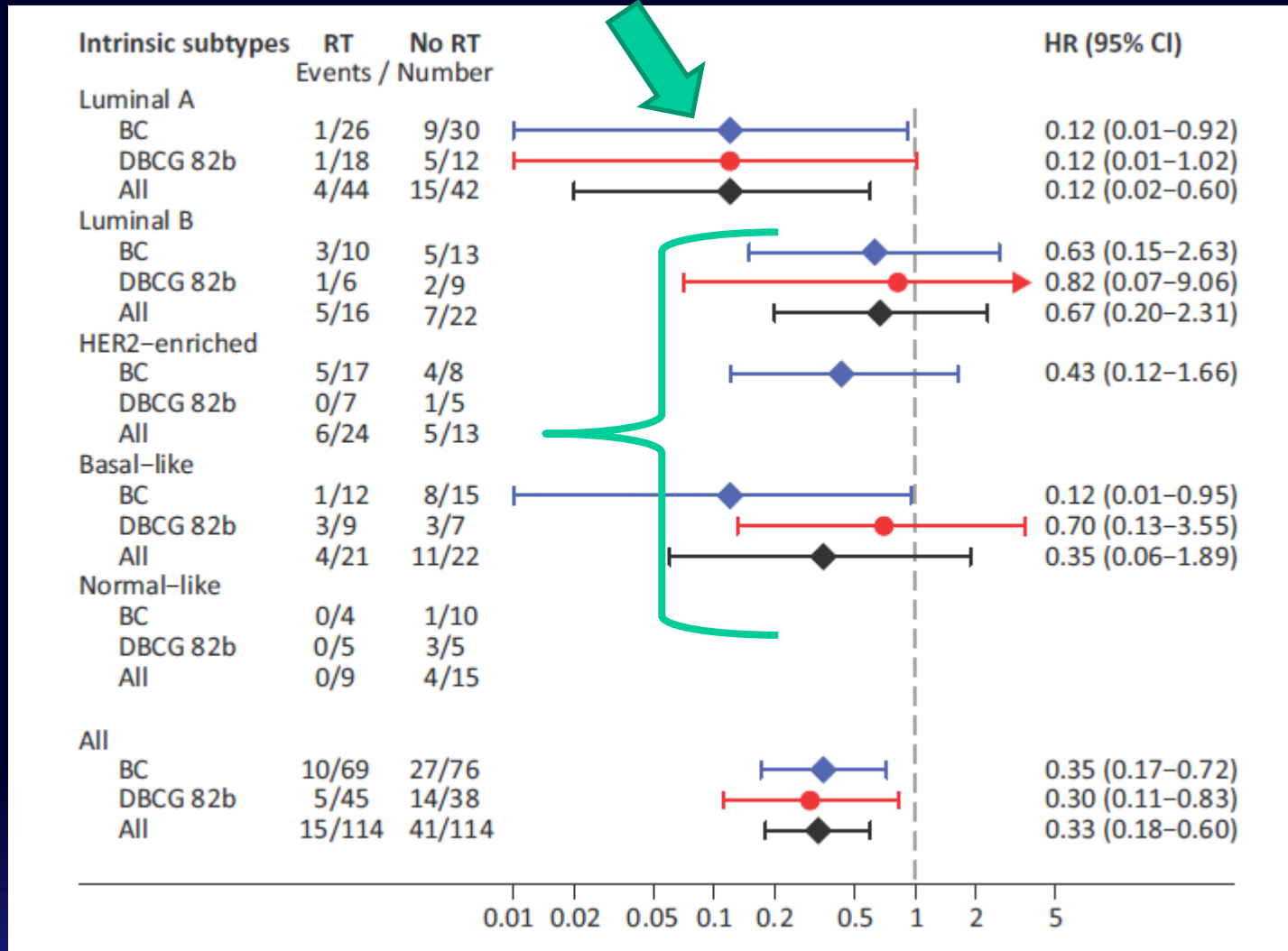
- Very low rates of LRR and DM post mastectomy for patients with N1 microscopic breast cancer
- No radiation indicated

# Breast Cancer Biology Matters!

- Clinical trial data addressing axillary management focuses on number of nodal metastasis without attention to biological behavior of specific disease
- Current Breast Cancer management predicated on breast cancer subtype
- Well established that breast cancer subtype is prognostic for likelihood of local regional recurrence as well as distant metastasis
- MA.20 RNI benefit varied by hormone receptor (HR) status on multivariate analysis – largest benefit in HR negative N1 patients.

→ Cancer Care Ontario Guidelines recommend PMRT for N1 only in HR negative cases (\*Brackstone et al, JCO 39: 2021)

# PMRT in Premenopausal Breast Cancer and Subtype: British Columbia (BC) & DBCG 82B Trials



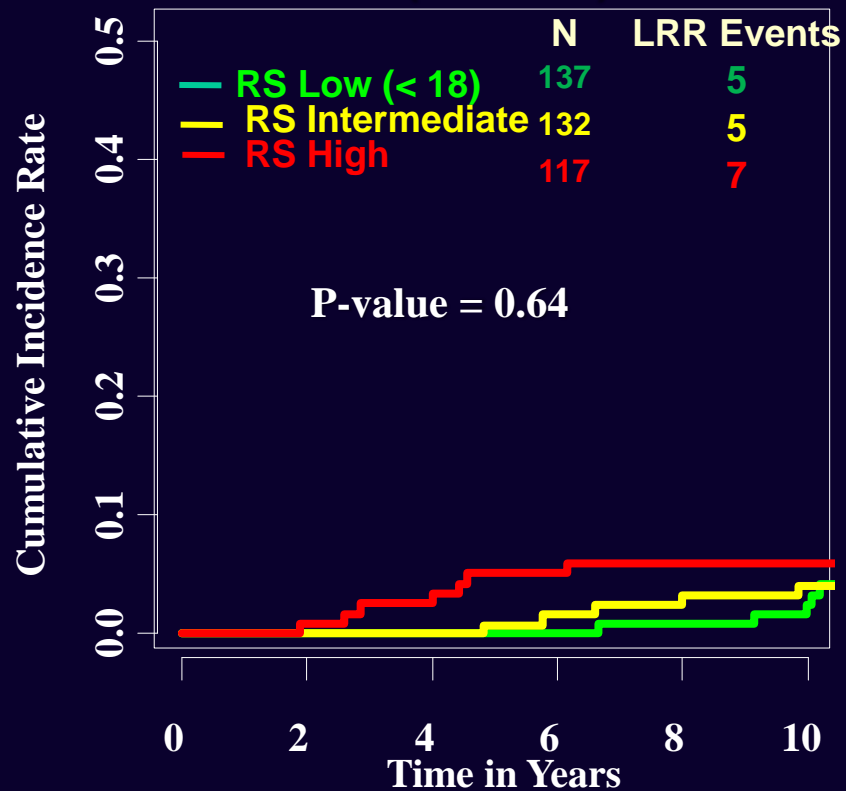
- N=228
- Node positive disease
- PAM50 genes essential for intrinsic subtype classification
- LRR **lowest** Luminal A
  - 4% BC
  - 6% DBC82B
- ★ **RT benefit was greatest for Luminal A**

Favors RT ←

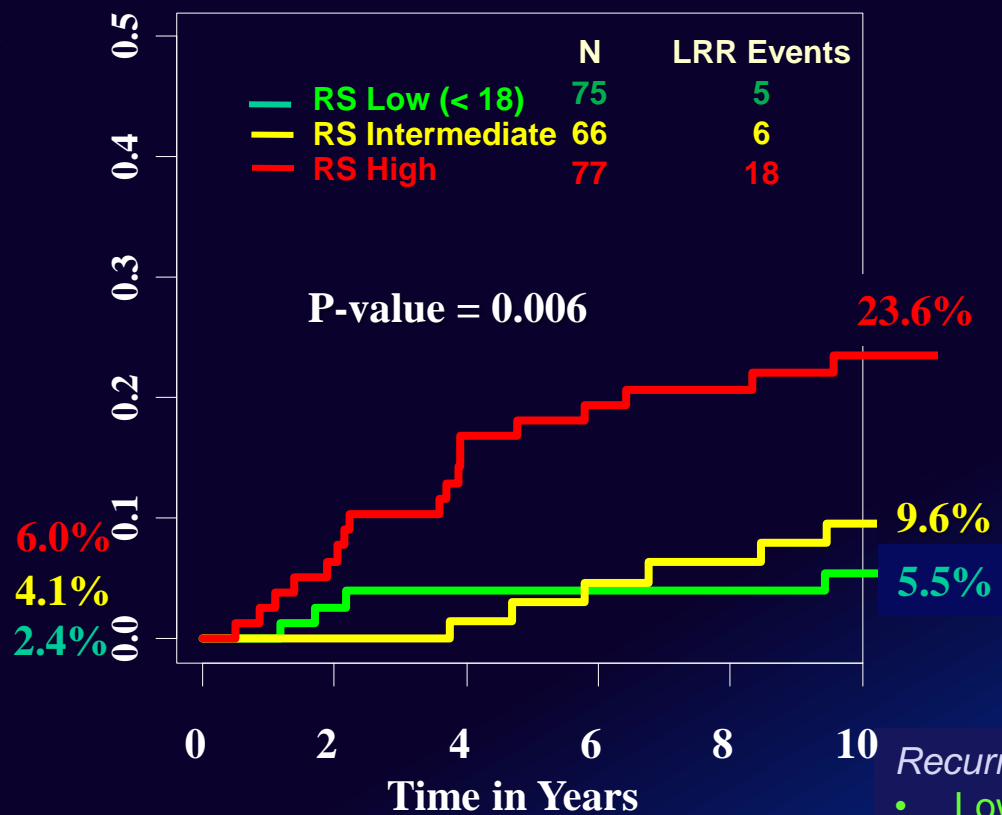
# Oncotype RS Multigene Assay Prognostic for LRR Post Mastectomy for ER/PR+ Breast Cancer

NSABP B28: ER+, Node positive

1-3 Positive Nodes  
(N=386)



≥4 Positive Nodes  
(N=218)



Recurrence Score:

- Low < 18
- Intermediate 18-30
- High > 30

- n = 1065
- Median follow-up was 11.2 years
- Breast radiation only Post lumpectomy ( No RNI)

Mamounas EP, et al. *JNCI* 2017

# Longstanding Debate of Whether RNI Post-Neoadjuvant Systemic Therapy Should be Based on Clinical Nodal Status (cN1+) Versus Pathologic (ypN0) Status?

- Multiple retrospective analyses of prospectively collected clinical trial data identified that LRR is lower after neoadjuvant systemic therapy when there is pCR or ypN0:
  - ▶ 2012: NSABP B18 and NSABP B27
  - ▶ 2017: EORTC 10994 / BIG 1-00
  - ▶ 2019: GBG GeparTrio, GeparQuattro, GeparQuinto
  - ▶ 2023: TRYPHEANA and NeoSphere (HER2)

# NRG NSABP B-51/RTOG 1304 Trial Phase III

- Clinical T1-3**N1**M0 breast cancer
- Pathology positive axillary node (**FNA/Core**)
  - Neoadjuvant CT ± anti HER2
- ypN0** at definitive Breast Surgery + AND or SNB

Accrued: n= 1641 2013-2020

★ Primary Endpoint: IDFS

Randomization

Arm 1

**No Regional Nodal XRT**

- A. Lumpectomy: Breast XRT
- B. Mastectomy: Observation

Arm 2

**Regional Nodal XRT**

- A. Lump.: Breast/Nodal XRT
- B. Mast: Chestwall/ Nodal XRT

Stratification: Type of Surgery (Mast v. Lump) , ER-Status (+ v. -), HER2 Status (+ v. -), pCR in Breast (yes v. no)

# NRG NSABP B51 RTOG 1304 Clinical Trial

- Accrued n=1641
  - Analysis for disease related endpoints: N = 1566
  - Analysis for overall survival: N= 1602
- Eligibility: (select)
  - cT1-3, cN1 (bx proven)
  - Known ER, PR, HER2 (per ASCO CAP guidelines)
  - Complete  $\geq 8$  weeks of neoadjuvant chemotherapy (with anti-HER2 therapy if HER2+)
  - **ypN0** (By SNB with  $\geq 2$  SN or/ and Ax. Diss.)
  - Lumpectomy or mastectomy (negative margins)
- Median Follow-up Time: 59.5 months
- Primary endpoint: IBCRF
  - invasive local, regional, or distant recurrence, or death from breast cancer

# Statistical Considerations:

- Primary endpoint – invasive BC recurrence-free interval (IBCRFI)
- Study was designed to have 80% power to detect 35% reduction in annual IBCRFI rate (4.6% abs. risk reduction in 5-yr cumulative rate)
- Per protocol, final analysis was to occur after 172 events or 10 years after study initiation
- Time-driven analysis is reported
- Definitive analysis was based on the intent-to-treat principle
- Patients were analyzed as randomized, regardless of eligibility or protocol compliance
- Patients with no follow-up or not at risk for recurrence were excluded

# Population Characteristics:

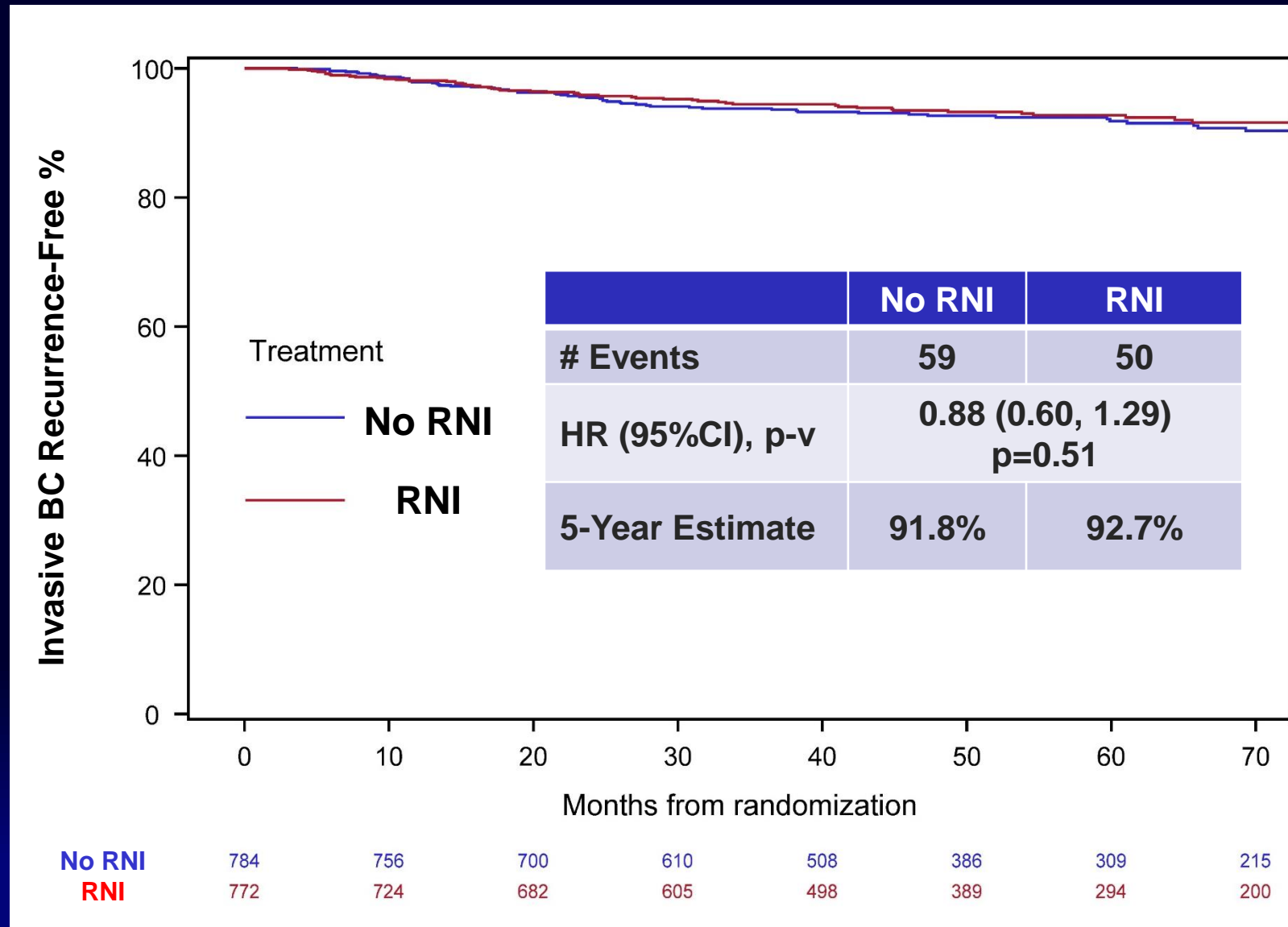
→ All variables (patient, tumor, treatment, etc.) have equally balanced representation in Arms 1 and 2

Variable	%
<b>Age:</b> (median) <50 years	52 years 40.5 %
<b>Race/ Ethnicity:</b> Asian	6 %
AA	17.5 %
White	69 %
Hispanic	14 %
<b>Clinical Tumor Size:</b> cT1	21 %
cT2	60 %
cT3	19 %
<b>Tumor Subtype:</b> Triple-negative	22
ER+ and /or PR+ / HER2-	21
ER- / PR- / HER2+	24.5
ER+ and /or PR+ / HER2+	32
<b>Surgery:</b> Lumpectomy	58 %
Mastectomy	42 %
<b>Axillary Surgery:</b> SN	55.5 %
ALND	44.5 %
<b>pCR Breast</b>	79 %

→ 56.5%

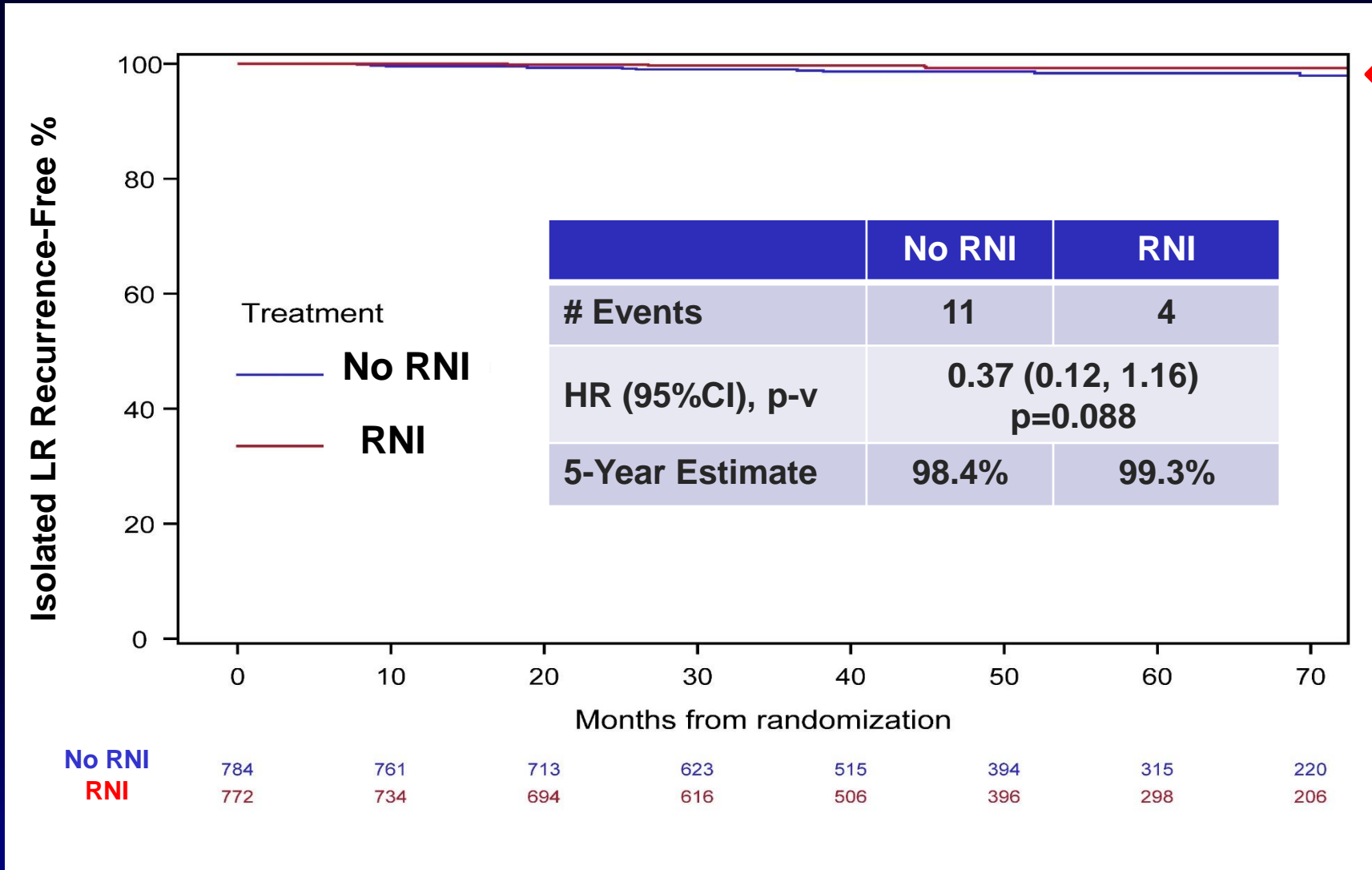
# Primary Endpoint:

## Invasive Breast Cancer Recurrence-free Interval (IBCRFI)



# Secondary Endpoint:

## Isolated Loco-Regional Recurrence-free Interval (ILRRFI)\*



# NRG NSABP B51 RTOG 1304 Results

Characteristic	No RNI	RNI	HR (95% CI)
IBCRFI	91.8%	92.7 %	0.88 (0.60,1.29) p=0.51
LRRFI (isolated)	98.4%	99.3%	0.37 (0.12, 1.16) p=0.088
Distant Recurrence FI	93.4 %	93.4 %	1.00 (0.67, 1.51) p=0.99
Disease Free Survival	88.5%	88.3%	1.06 (0.79, 1.44) p=0.69
Overall Survival	94 %	93.6 %	1.12 (0.75, 1.68) p=0.59

Median Follow-up Time: 59.5 mo.'s

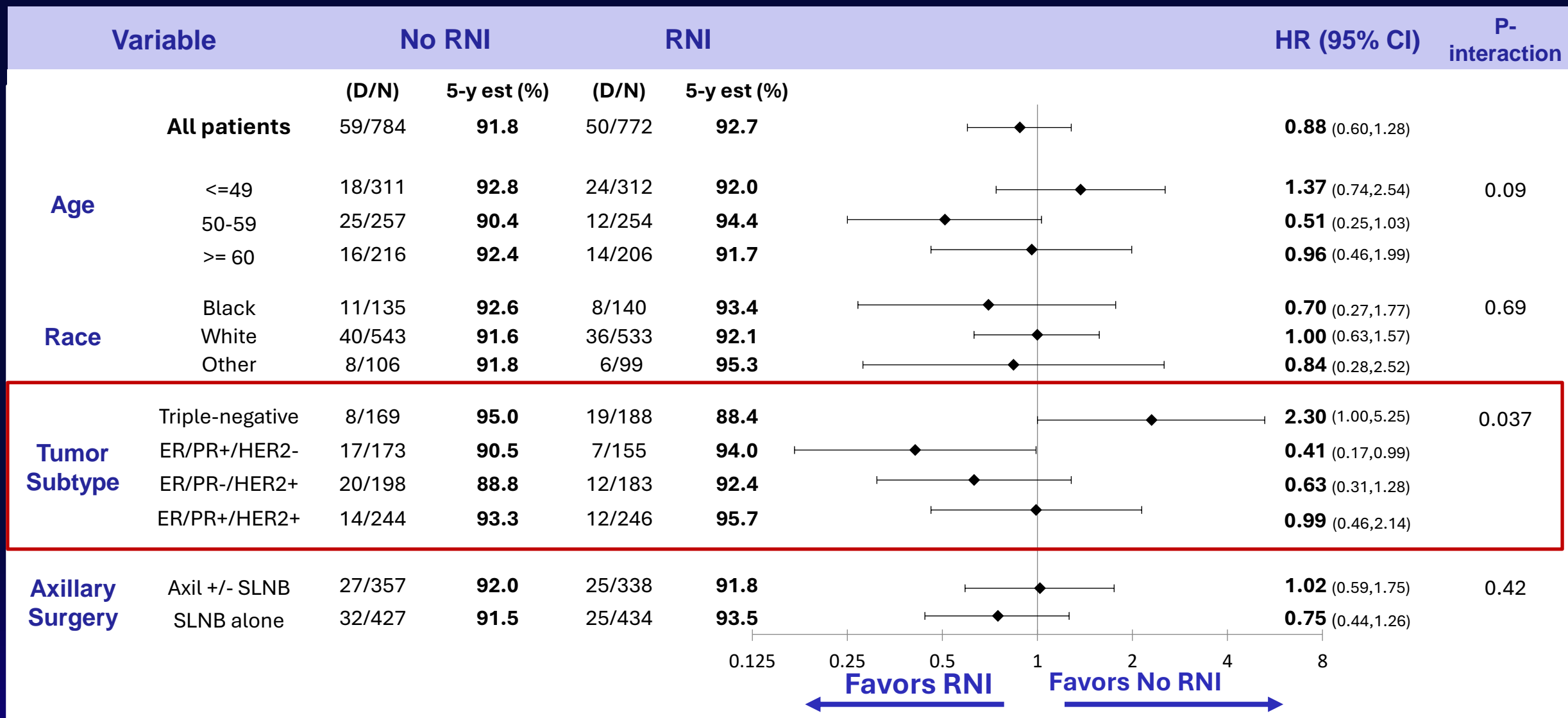
# IBCRFI – Subgroup Analysis by Stratification Factors

Variable	No RNI		RNI		HR (95% CI)	P-interaction	
	(D/N)	5-y est (%)	(D/N)	5-y est (%)			
Surgery	All patients	59/784	91.8	50/772	92.7	0.88 (0.60,1.28)	0.28
	Lumpectomy	26/454	93.5	28/454	92.8	1.08 (0.63,1.84)	
	Mastectomy	33/330	89.5	22/318	92.6	0.72 (0.42,1.23)	
ER/PR	Negative	28/367	91.7	31/371	90.4	1.12 (0.67,1.86)	0.17
	Positive	31/417	92.1	19/401	94.9	0.66 (0.37,1.16)	
HER2	Negative	25/342	92.6	26/343	90.9	1.01 (0.59,1.76)	0.47
	Positive	34/442	91.3	24/429	94.3	0.77 (0.46,1.31)	
pCR breast	No	20/173	87.8	15/172	90.3	0.74 (0.38,1.45)	0.59
	Yes	39/611	93.0	35/600	93.5	0.93 (0.59,1.47)	
Adjuvant Chemotherapy	No	57/780	92.1	50/766	92.7	0.92 (0.63,1.34)	
	Yes	2/4		0/6			

← Favours RNI
Favours No RNI →

# IBCRFI – Exploratory Subgroup Analysis



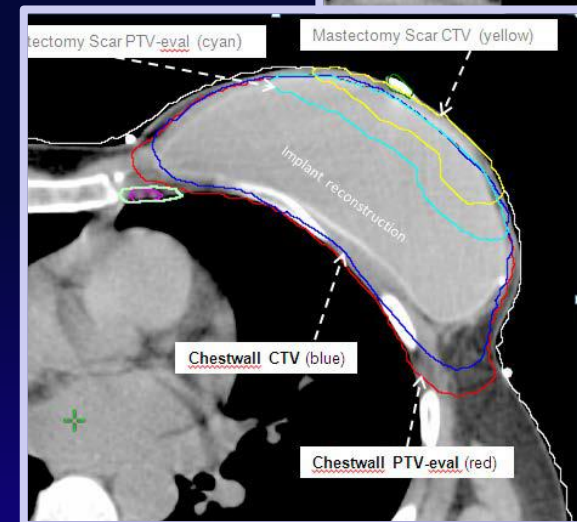
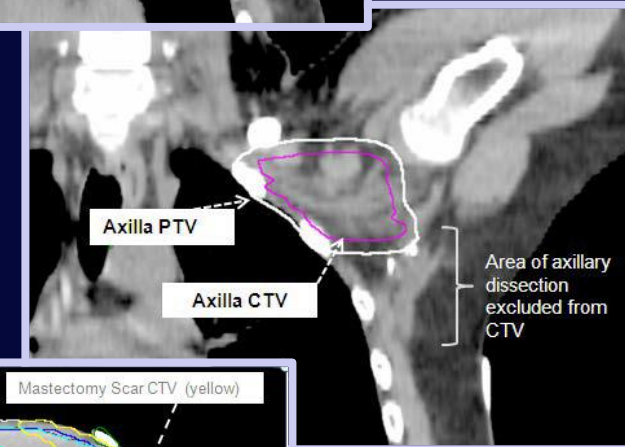
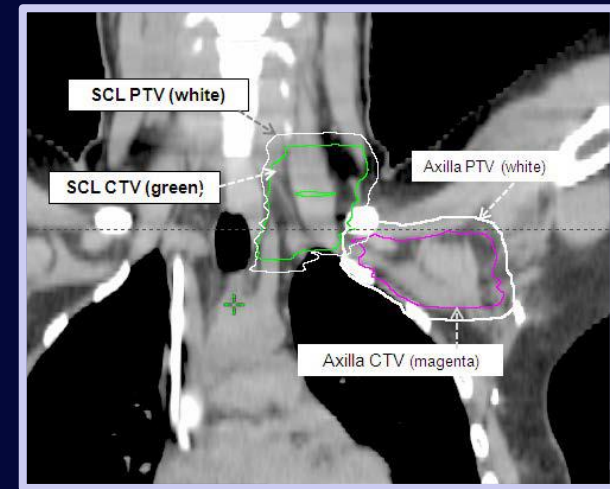
# NRG NSABP B51 RTOG 1304

## Location of Isolated LRR

Location	No RNI #	RNI #
Local	2	4
Regional	8	0
Loco-regional	1	0
Total	11	4

# First NCTN trial to utilize CT Target-based 3DCRT/ IMRT for RNI

- All patients underwent CT simulation followed by delineation of targets for breast/chest wall, regional nodes, and OAR (heart, lungs, thyroid, etc.)
- Physician approval of a composite radiation treatment plan with dose volume analyses (DVA) meeting protocol target and OAR dose constraints was required.
- Two-step radiation quality assurance (QA):
  - centralized benchmarking by each enrolling facility,
  - Individual review of each case
- ★ Per protocol or acceptable variation standards were met in
  - 94.4% for TV/OAR score; (no RNI:98.4%, RNI:92.0%)
  - 95.8% for overall DVA score; ( no RNI:98.0%, RNI:94.5%)



# NRG NSABP B51 RTOG 1304 TOXICITY

- Toxicity

- ➔ 1,559 patients (No RNI:800; RNI:759).
- ➔ No study-related deaths and no unexpected toxicities.
- ➔ Grade 4 toxicity was rare (No RNI: 0.1%, vs. RNI: 0.5%);
- ➔ Grade 3 toxicity was uncommon (No RNI: 6.5%, RNI:10%)
- ➔ Most common Grade 3 toxicity was radiation dermatitis (No RNI: 3.3%, RNI: 5.7%)

# Change in Practice KUMC Radiation Oncology: RNI Post Neoadjuvant Chemotherapy

- Clinical cT1-3, cN1 / ypN0:
  - Observation post mastectomy / Breast irradiation post lumpectomy
    - Subtypes: TN, HER2+
    - Response in breast: RCB-0 / RCB-1
    - Selective ER+/PR+/HER2-,
- Clinical cT4 or cN2-3/ ypN0: regional nodal irradiation
- Clinical cN0 or cN+ / ypN+: regional nodal irradiation

# Fractionation for RNI

- Chestwall and/or breast and regional nodal irradiation has historically used conventional fractionation 48-50 Gy / 2 Gy per treatment +/- boost for up to 6 weeks of treatment
- 3 Clinical Trials support that it is safe to utilize moderate hypofractionation for RNI:

Trial	n	RNI
Chinese Academy of Medicine	820	PMRT
Dana Farber FABREC	440	PMRT Reconstruction
Alliance RT CHARM (A221505)	880	PMRT Reconstruction

# Phase III Trial Hypo fractionated PMRT

## No Difference in LRR

### ELIGIBILITY

- 18-75 yo.
- Mastectomy+ AxND
- $\geq 4$  Axillary nodes +



R



Standard  
PMRT:

50 Gy / 25 F  
2.0 Gy

Hypo fractionated  
PMRT:

43.5 Gy / 16F  
2.9 Gy

- 2008-2006 Chinese Acad. Med
- n= 820
- 2D RT Chestwall + SCL nodes (No IMC)
  - Chestwall 6-9 MeV, SCL 6 MV
- Median age: 49 years
- Median Tsz: 2.5 cm
- Median + nodes: 6 (4 – 11)
- ER positive: 75%
- Median follow up: 4.8 years

5 year	50 Gy/ 25 F	43.5 Gy/ 15 F
Local		
Regional	8.3%	8.1%
Recurrence		

Primary Endpoint: Local regional recurrence

Late toxicity	50 Gy/ 25 F	43.5 Gy/ 16 F	
Skin toxicity	..	..	0.669
Grade 1-2	90 (22%)	86 (21%)	..
Grade 3	0	1 (<1%)	..
Lymphoedema	..	..	0.961
Grade 1-2	81 (20%)	78 (19%)	..
Grade 3	3 (1%)	3 (1%)	..
Shoulder dysfunction	..	..	0.734
Grade 1-2	13 (3%)	7 (2%)	..
Grade 3	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)	..
Lung fibrosis	..	..	0.081
Grade 1-2	42 (10%)	62 (15%)	..
Grade 3	0	0	..
Ischaemic heart disease	..	..	0.569
Grade 1-2	1 (<1%)	3 (1%)	..
Grade 3	3 (1%)	4 (1%)	..

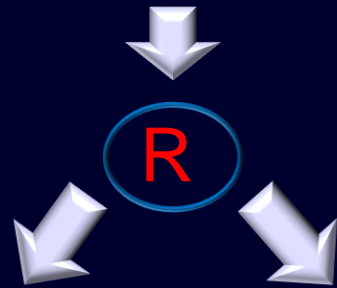
## Late Toxicity

- Similar incidence

# Dana Farber FABREC Clinical Trial

## ELIGIBILITY

- Stage I-III
- Mastectomy+ SN or AxND
- Immediate Breast reconstruction



## Standard

### PMRT:

CW: 50 Gy / 25 F

Nodes: 46-50/ 23-25 F

## Hypo fractionated

### PMRT:

CW:42.56 Gy /16F

Nodes: 39.9 Gy/ 15 F

- Opened: 2018
- Targeted Accrual: 400
- PMRT includes:
  - CW/ reconstructed breast
  - SCL
  - Axilla (optional)
  - IMC (optional)

PI: Rinaa Punglia MD

Primary Endpoint: FACT-B Physical Well Being at 6 months

# FABREC Clinical Trial

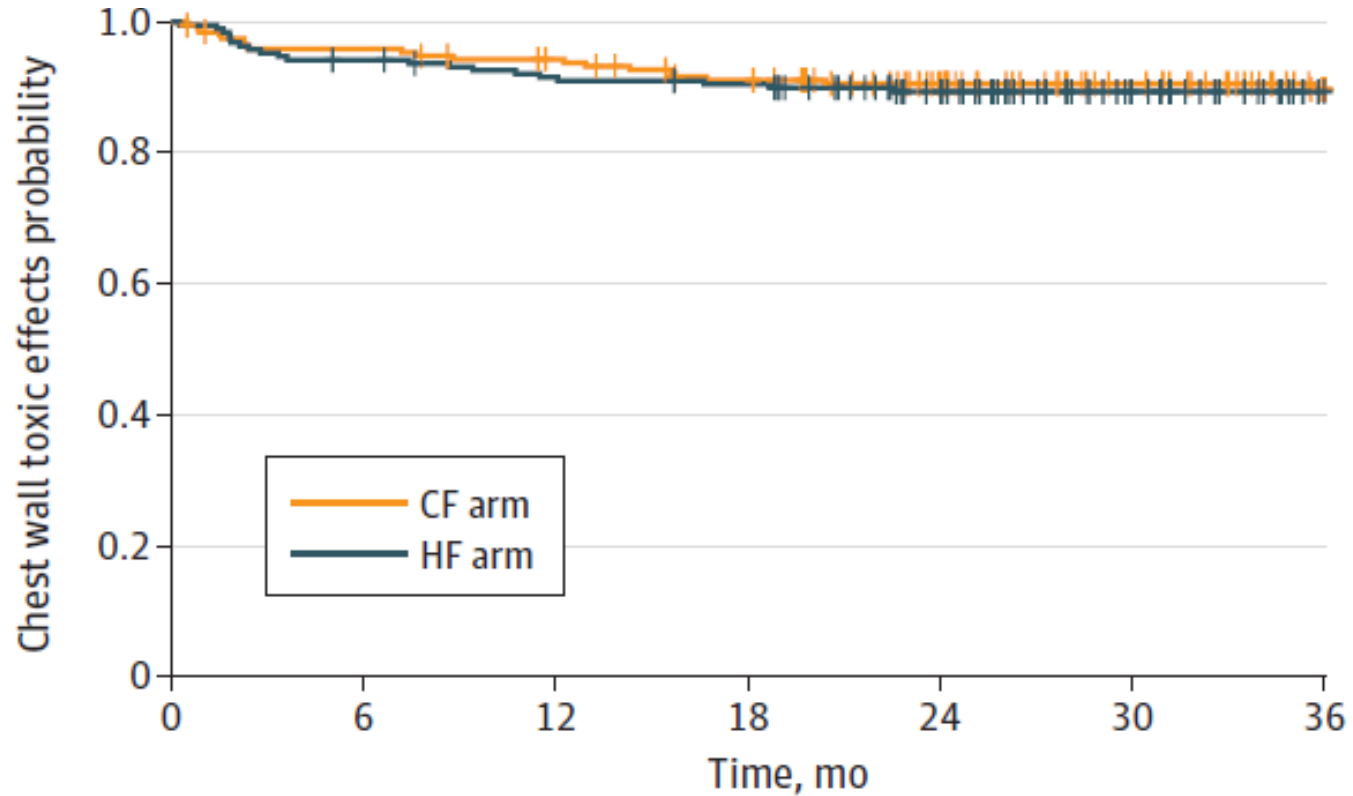
- 3/2018 – 11/2021 n=400 18 centers
- **Eligibility:**
  - Stage 0-III treated with PMRT
  - s/p TM w/ Immediate placement of implant or TE
- QOL Instruments: baseline, 6, 12, 18 mo.
  - FACT-B
  - Breast-Q
  - Lymph-ICF
- **Primary Endpoint:** Physical well being domain of FACT-B at 6 months with pre-specified stratification by Age < or  $\geq$  45 years.

Wong et al, JAMA Oncol 2024

- **Population:**
  - Median age 47 yrs (23-79)
  - Neoadjuvant CT: 67.8%
  - Neoadjuvant ET: 21.5%
  - Median Follow up: 4 years
- **Results:**
  - No difference in FACT B or CW toxicity HF vs CF
  - $\uparrow$  CW toxicity on MVA:
    - Post op infection (pre RT)
    - RT to TE (vs Implant)
    - Preop ET
    - Number of LN's removed
  - Age < 45: less bother with HF (p=0.045)

# FABREC Clinical Trial

## Freedom From ChestWall Toxic Effects: (G3 CTCAE V.4)



No. at risk

CF arm	195	185	178	168	147	124	101
HF arm	190	178	171	168	148	121	99

# Alliance A221505: RT CHARM

## ELIGIBILITY

- Stage IIa-IIIa
- Mastectomy+ SN or AxND
- Breast reconstruction present or planned



## Standard

### PMRT:

50 Gy / 25 F  
2.0 Gy

## Hypo fractionated

### PMRT:

42.56 Gy /16F  
2.66 Gy

- Opened: 2017
- Targeted Accrual: 898
- Radiation targets:
  - CW/ reconstructed breast
  - Axilla
  - SCL
  - IMC

Primary Endpoint: Reconstruction Complication Rate

Poppe et al, ASTRO 2023

# Questions?

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