

Comment on: “Occupational exposures and male breast cancer: A nested case-control study in the nordic countries”



Keywords:

Male breast cancer
Genetic predisposition
Occupational exposure

Dear Editor,

Findings about etiology of male breast cancer in the work by Talibov et al. are welcome and appreciated as the disease is understudied. Some risk factors, such as family history of breast cancer and genetic mutations including those in the BRCA2 gene, are well established for male breast cancer. Thus, it was surprising that there was no mention of the presence or absence of genetic predisposition for breast cancer among the participants in this study. The time of diagnosis ranged widely, from 1961 to 2005, and genetic testing may have been available only in the most recent years. However, family history could have been retrievable for most cases. One of the strengths of high quality of cancer registrations is that it makes feasible access to information like whether any patient has a first-degree relative with the disease, a feature that could double his risk of breast cancer. In order to establish the

importance of occupational agents as risk factors for male breast cancer, genetic predisposition must be considered in data collection and analysis, or its absence should be considered as a potential biasing factor in the interpretation of the findings of this study.

Reference

- [1] Talibov M, Hansen J, Heikkinen S, Martinsen J, Sparen P, Tryggvadottir L, et al. Occupational exposures and male breast cancer: a nested case-control study in the Nordic countries. *Breast*, Volume 48, 65 – 72.
- [2] Giordano SH. Breast cancer in men. *N Engl J Med* 2018;378(24):2311e20.
- [3] Brinton LA, Richesson DA, Gierach GL, et al. Prospective evaluation of risk factors for male breast cancer. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2008; 100: 1477-1481.

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RE: “Comment on: “Occupational exposures and male breast cancer: A nested case-control study in the Nordic countries””



Keywords:

Case-control study
Job-exposure matrix
Male breast cancer
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We'd like to thank Dr Tjasa Oblak [1] for the correspondence on our published study [2]. Heredity or family history of breast cancer would be interesting to consider in this study. Although identification of persons with BRCA1, BRCA2 or other types of genetic mutations would be very difficult or even impossible, close relatives of study participants could be identified via Population Registries and traced for their cancer status with the help of excellent cancer registries in the Nordic countries. That would however require complicated permission updates as well as tremendous resources. We did not find it necessary to make such an extra effort because

there is no reason to assume that genetic disorders or family history of cancer is linked to occupational factors.

References

- [1] Oblak T. The Breast "Comment on: "Occupational exposures and male breast cancer: a nested case-control study in the Nordic countries. 2019. in press.
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