Analysis of Marginally Abnormal Morphology Axillary Lymph Nodes with Pathologic Correlation

Joanna Riegert, RPA
Matthew Stein, MD
Matthew Morgan, MD

Category:
Radiology

Sub Category:
Breast Radiology

Objectives:
The purpose of this poster is to show the incidence of metastatic disease present in axillary lymph nodes in patients with a new breast cancer diagnosis that are considered marginally abnormal. The current standard that has been established for biopsy of axillary lymph nodes in these patients is a cortical thickness greater than 3 millimeters. This poster will focus on those patients just above this 3 millimeter cortical thickness or with a region of focal cortical thickening threshold that have, upon biopsy, been positive for metastatic disease with pathological concordance. This has a major impact on treatment planning.

Methods:
- Ultrasound imaging characteristic of abnormal axillary lymph nodes
- Mammographic imaging correlation on patients with new cancer diagnosis
- MRI imaging of the breast/axillary lymph nodes showing abnormalities in patients with a recent diagnosis of breast cancer
- Pathologic concordance of several cases where nodes marginally met biopsy criteria
- Discussion of changes to breast cancer treatments based on node negativity vs. positivity

Results and Conclusion:
The viewer will gain a better understanding of the imaging threshold of the biopsy criteria for axillary lymph nodes in the setting of a new breast cancer diagnosis. This must be strictly upheld, as this poster will show that nodes just above this threshold or with small morphologic abnormalities are often positive for metastatic disease, affecting the treatment plan. This poster will help the viewer see the course of treatment from imaging to intervention, and how the treatment plan developed following the diagnosis.