

Western Regional Integrated Health Authority

MEMORANDUM

*Distributed
Oct 4/5/05 HS*

TO: All Physicians, Nursing Administrators, Public Health Nurses, Diagnostic Imaging Department, Population Health Consultants & Breast Screening Clinic

FROM: Dr. Ken Jenkins
VP-Medical Services

DATE: October 4, 2005

SUBJECT: ER/PR RECEPTORS

Please find attached some questions and answers that may be helpful in addressing concerns by clients who have had breast cancer and have concerns about the re-testing of ER/PR receptors. The re-testing is being conducted by Eastern Health through Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto, Ontario.

Should you wish to contact me regarding this issue, please call 637-5000, Ext. 5168.

Dr. Ken Jenkins
VP-Medical Services

KJ/mh

Attachment

Western Regional Integrated Health Authority

CLIENT HANDOUT

➤ What is ER/PR?

All patients who have had breast cancer have been tested for the presence or absence of estrogen and progesterone receptors (ER/and PR). The presence or absence of ER and PR helps determine the most appropriate treatment of breast cancer.

When your ER and PR are positive, hormone therapy is one treatment option open to you. ER and PR are just one of the many things oncologists look at to determine the type of cancer treatment a patient will receive.

➤ What is happening now? Why are some test results different?

All breast cancer samples gathered in the Western Region are sent to Eastern Health for testing. Right now, Eastern Health has begun retesting a select group of breast cancer patients from across the province – those whose results indicated that they were negative for ER and PR. In 2004, the lab at the Health Sciences Center that does all of the provincial ER and PR testing introduced a new piece of technology and discovered some inconsistent results from the old system.

This has prompted Eastern Health to need to re-test all of the negative ER and PR receptor results since 1997 to ensure that all patients have every treatment opportunity that may be available to them.

The WRIHA will be submitting previously collected tissue samples to Eastern Health for this re-testing. Patients will not be required to come to hospital or have any additional testing.

Please note, only a small percentage of breast cancer patients may be affected by this retesting.

➤ As a breast cancer patient, I haven't been contacted. What should I do?

The laboratory is continuing to test results and patients are being contacted if there is a change to their test result and their treatment may be affected. If you have or had breast cancer and are concerned about your previous test results and treatment, you may wish to contact your oncologist, surgeon or family doctor.