

Canadian Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery

Position Statement on Lymphoma and Breast Implants

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the United States published a device safety communication on January 26, 2011 on the association of breast implants and anaplastic large cell lymphoma.

ALCL is a non-Hodgkins lymphoma – a cancer which can occur anywhere in the body and involves the cells of the immune system. The incidence of ALCL in the United States is 1/500,000 per year. The estimated incidence of this type of lymphoma in the breast is 3/100,000,000. To put this in perspective, there are 4,000,000 patients who had breast implants inserted between 1998 and 2009 in the United States and 5-10,000,000 worldwide.

It is important to note that this is not a cancer of the breast. It has been found in the scar tissue (capsule) that forms around a breast implant and is not associated with any particular type of implant. It is also important to note that these cases are not typical (they are ALK negative) and the outcomes are more favourable than typical ALCL.

It is important to remember that breast cancer occurs in 1/9 patients but ALCL occurs in 1/500,000 patients with breast implants. All cases so far had symptoms that could be diagnosed by your plastic surgeon and all of the reported cases had tumours which could be seen on mammography. Removal of the implants and capsules is curative.

The FDA has clearly stated: "If you have breast implants, there is no need to change your routine medical care and follow-up". They have also stated: "prophylactic breast implant removal in patients without symptoms or other abnormality is not recommended".

The Canadian Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery commends the FDA for working to pursue a collaboration with plastic surgeons to develop a registry to gather additional information to better characterize ALCL in women with breast implants.

Patients are encouraged to read more details on the following websites from the FDA and to contact their plastic surgeons if they have any concerns.

[FDA Medical Device Safety Communication: Reports of Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma \(ALCL\) in Women with Breast Implants](#)

[Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma \(ALCL\) In Women with Breast Implants: Preliminary FDA Findings & Analyses](#)