

Dr. Moran's questions to evaluate testimonials (Gorski modification)

- * Was the cancer definitely present?
- * Did it go away (or clearly respond to therapy) as judged by reliable tests?
- * Was the advocated treatment the only one used?
- * Was the therapy a replacement for primary therapy or a replacement for adjuvant therapy?

Thanks to Dr. Peter Moran:

http://www.users.on.net/~pmoran/cancer/how_to_read_a_testimonial.htm

Primary versus adjuvant therapy

- * **Primary therapy**

- * Capable of curing or eliminating the cancer by itself
- * For most solid tumors: Surgical excision

- * **Adjuvant therapy**

- * Decreases the risk of recurrence *after* primary therapy
- * Radiation therapy: Reduces risk of **local recurrence**
- * Chemotherapy: Reduces the risk of **systemic recurrence**

- * **Neoadjuvant therapy**

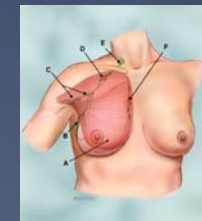
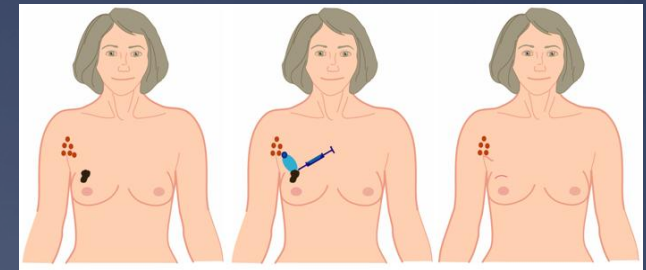
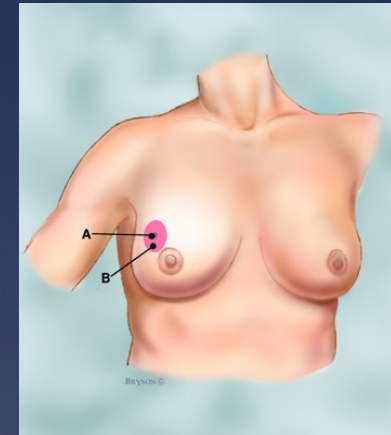
- * Designed to shrink a tumor to make organ-sparing surgery possible

The case of Suzanne Somers



Suzanne Somers: History

- * Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2000
 - * Lymph node negative by sentinel lymph node biopsy
 - * Estrogen receptor positive
 - * Stage I (probably; size not known)
- * Underwent lumpectomy and radiation therapy
- * Refused chemotherapy
- * Refused Tamoxifen (taking “bioidentical” hormones)
- * Now says she would not opt for radiation
- * Opted instead for Iscador (Mistletoe extract)



Sources:

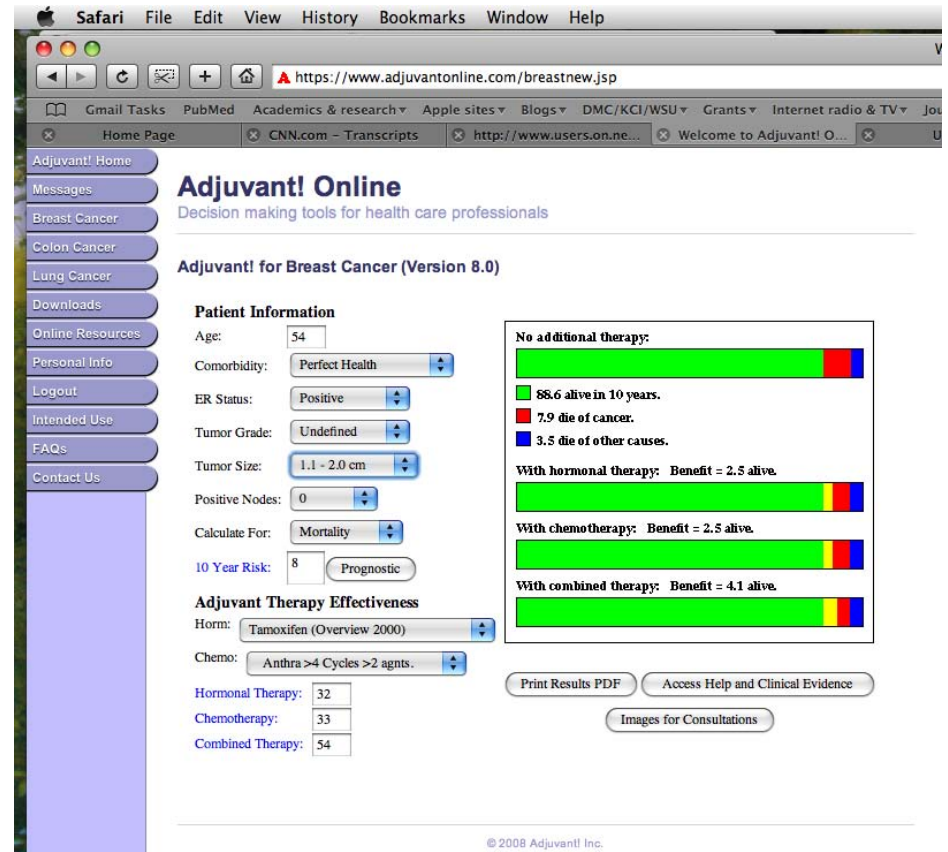
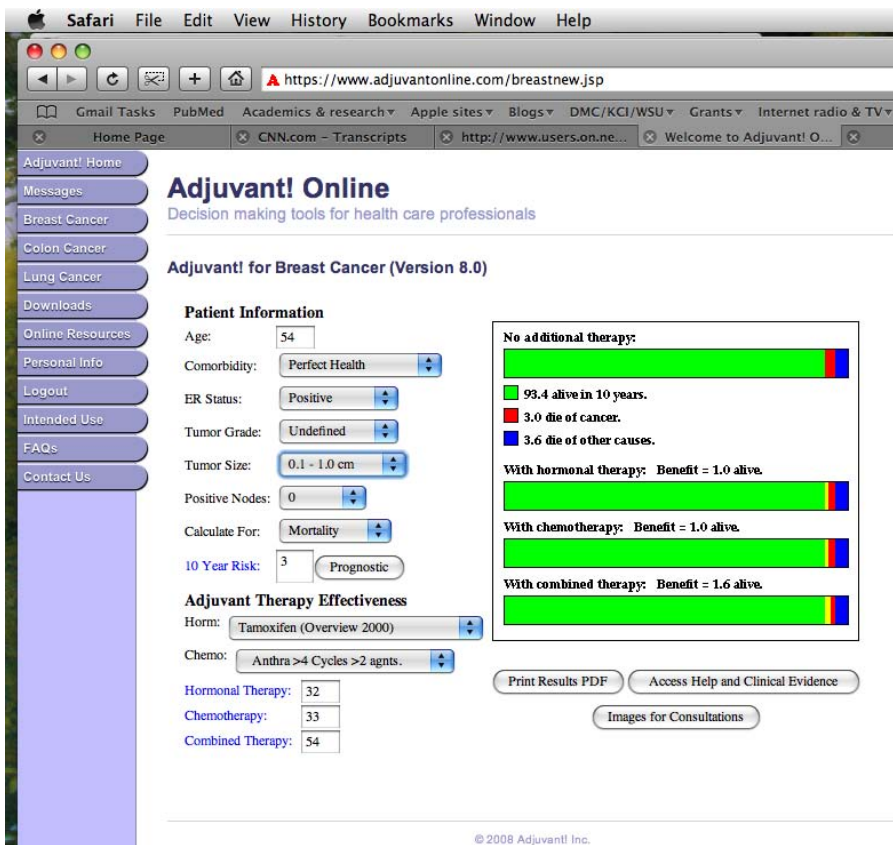
<http://www.thecancerblog.com/2006/12/13/suzanne-somers-breast-cancer-survivor-going-her-own-way/>

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0104/24/kl.00.html>

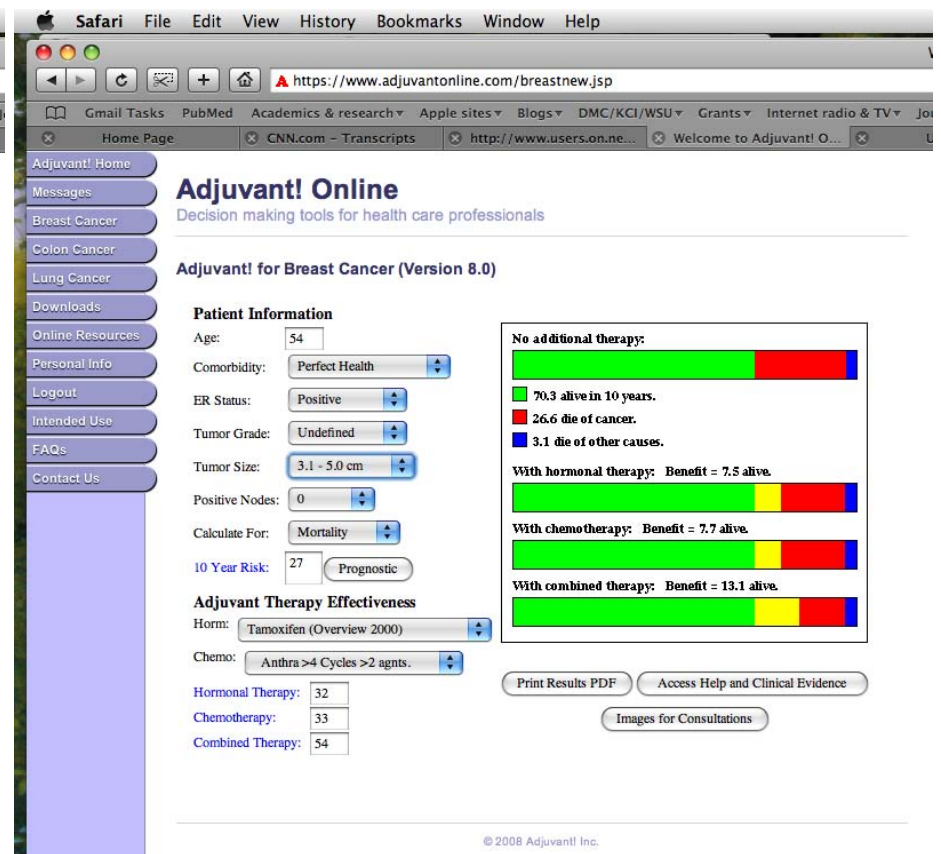
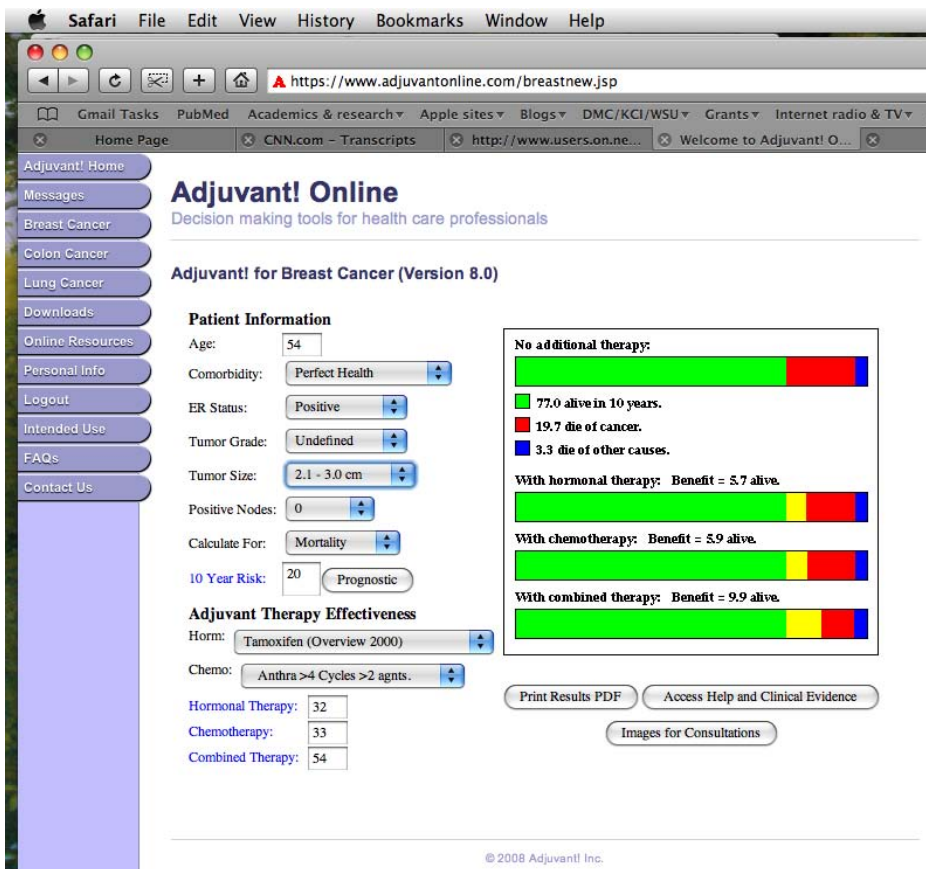
Answers to questions in the Somers case

- * Was the cancer definitely present?
 - * YES
- * Did it go away (or clearly respond to therapy) as judged by reliable tests?
 - * YES
 - * Surgery removed it
- * Was the advocated treatment the only one used?
 - * NO!
 - * Lumpectomy and radiation

What is the benefit of chemotherapy and Tamoxifen in a case like Somers (0-2 cm)?

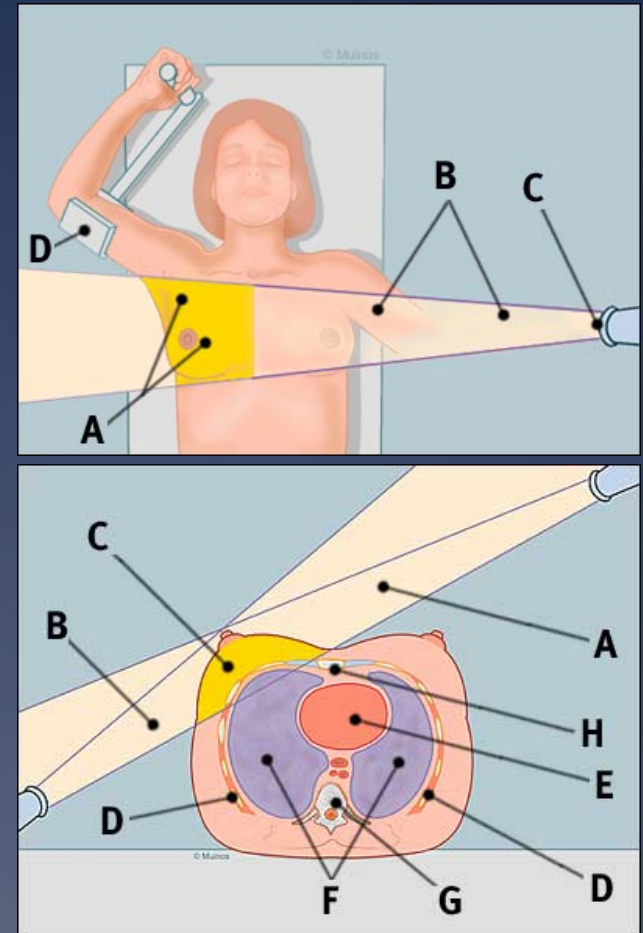


What is the benefit of chemotherapy and Tamoxifen in a case like Somers (2-5 cm)?



Take home lessons

- * Surgery cures most breast cancers that can be cured
- * Radiation, chemotherapy, and hormonal therapy are icing on the cake
- * The benefits of chemotherapy and hormonal therapy increase with more advanced resectable tumors
- * Oncotype



A brief testimonial interlude

Natural Cure Testimonial Woman (NCTW): “I cured myself of breast cancer using herbs and diet. No toxic poisons pushed by big pharma for huge profits for me!”

Mean and Nasty Skeptic (MNS): “Congratulations! That’s really amazing! I’m so happy for you! I’m curious, though. May I ask you a question about how you did it?”

NCTW: Sure.

MNS: How was your breast cancer diagnosed?

NCTW: What do you mean?

MNS: Well, what kind of biopsy did you have?

NCTW (now suspicious and hesitant): I had a surgical biopsy. Why do you ask?



A typical mean and nasty skeptic as seen by NCTW

Why did the mean and nasty skeptic ask about her biopsy?



Lumpectomy versus excisional biopsy

- * **Lumpectomy:** Excision of a breast cancer with curative intent. More properly called a partial mastectomy.
- * **Excisional biopsy:** Excision of a breast mass for diagnostic intent.
 - * Image-guided (mammography, ultrasound, MRI)
 - * Straight up old-fashioned surgical
- * **Differences:**
 - * Intent
 - * Aggressiveness
 - * **Excisional biopsy can equal lumpectomy**

What this means...

...is that a woman who has undergone an excisional biopsy has had some “standard” therapy and may well have had a definitive excision of her breast cancer!