



Health Watch USAsm

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Review of Pre-operative Evaluation of Women Undergoing Hysterectomy and Myomectomy

Health Watch USA strongly supports the announcement that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention plans to take action on the pre-operative evaluation of women scheduled for hysterectomy or myomectomy, using the non-oncological techniques such as morcellation. A recent article in the journal *Obstetrics and Gynecology* (Desai VB, et al, April 13, 2018) found an astonishingly high risk of unsuspected uterine, cervical and ovarian cancers (1.44%, 0.60%, and 0.19%, respectively) in women undergoing uterine operations for presumably benign conditions.

In women 55 and older, the risk of unsuspected uterine cancer alone was up to 12.15%, depending upon the surgical route which was evaluated. With an overall incidence of 6.0%. These rates of undetected gynecological cancers - diagnosed after the fact, are unacceptably high.

The new study expands on prior analyses of uterine soft tissue sarcomas and extends to other forms of malignancy. The FDA warnings against morcellation in 2014 and again in 2017 were a necessary step in protecting women. However, the new research and the high magnitude of oncological risk now demonstrated points to the need for more to be done. Specifically, a complete reevaluation of preoperative screening algorithms for women with symptomatic uterine disease is necessary. CDC director, Dr. Redfield, is to be commended for aiming to catalyze this reevaluation in an evidence-based manner.

Health Watch USA believes that the excessively high level of cancer risk in women poses a clear and present danger to the wellbeing of many unsuspecting women across the world – therefore, we urge the CDC directly to move definitively to establish guidelines that would protect women from diagnostic misses. Specifically, Health Watch USA asks that Dr. Redfield move towards guiding Gynecologist to utilize adequate risk stratification methods and if clinically efficacious tissue biopsy methods, to identify women with gynecological cancers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin J. Kavanagh'.

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS
Board Chairman
Health Watch USA