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Need for novel intra-operative margin assessment in breast conserving surgery

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Rapid advancements in the surgical resection of primary breast cancers have occurred in the last century. This evolution has maintained oncologic principles with significant aesthetic improvements. Breast conserving surgery implies the removal of the tumor with negative margins while preserving the breast. Positive margin rates after initial lumpectomy can be as high as 40% necessitating repeat intervention. Current intra-operative margin assessment with either frozen section analysis of the specimen margins or radiographic imaging is difficult and often inadequate and inaccurate. Using breast-specific intra-operative PET imaging devices, it may be possible to improve the accuracy of margin assessment while maximizing cosmetic and oncologic principles.

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