Concomitant radiochemotherapy followed by adjuvant chemotherapy in patients with poorly
differentiated nasopharyngeal cancer; tolerance and early results of treatment

Andrzej Kawecki, Beata Jagielska, Andrzej Jarząbski, Zbigniew Szutkowski, Dorota
Kiprian, Wojciech Rolski, Beata Pawłowska-Sendulka

Summary
Introduction: Recently, concomitant radiochemotherapy became a method of choice in patients with poorly
differentiated nasopharyngeal cancer. The aim of this study is to estimate tolerance and early results of the
concomitant radiochemotherapy followed by adjuvant chemotherapy (modified US Head and Neck Intergroup
protocol). Methods and material: Analysing protocol consist of conventionally fractionated radiotherapy
(TD=70Gy) given concomitantly with cisplatin (30 mg/m² daily during 3 days every 3 weeks). This part of
treatment was followed by 3 courses of PF (cisplatin + 5-fluorouracil) chemotherapy. Between August 1998 and
September 2003 thirty six patients (27 male and 9 female) were qualified to treatment. Median age was 33 years.
Results: Tolerance of concomitant radiochemotherapy was acceptable. Intensive mucosal acute reactions (>G2)
were observed in 67% patients. Life threatening complications (sepsis + DIC) was observed in single case. All
patients received radiotherapy in planned total dose. Eighty six percent of patients received cisplatin in planned
cumulated doses. Tolerance of the adjuvant chemotherapy was worse. Only 44% patients received all three cours-
eses of PF chemotherapy. The reasons of incomplete chemotherapy were neutropenia, infections, prolonged acute
reactions or performance status decreasing. Complete regression was obtained in 86% patients. Two years overall
and disease free survival rates were 83% and 72%, respectively. Conclusions: Our results confirm high activity of
the concomitant radiochemotherapy followed by chemotherapy in patients with poorly differentiated
nasopharyngeal cancer. Those results confirm also high toxicity of this regimen, what suggest very careful
patients qualification to treatment.