Cystic Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Neck: Could a Second Metastatic Focus Help?
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ABSTRACT
Squamous cell carcinoma of the neck presenting clinically as predominantly cystic lesion has often been considered as branchiogenic carcinoma in the past. However, such cystic lesions presently constitute a distinct form of head-neck metastasis, and a co-existent second metastatic focus could supposedly help distinguish them from branchiogenic carcinoma. We here present a case where, although the primary remained elusive, the associated spinal metastasis precluded us from diagnosing a cystic squamous cell carcinoma as branchiogenic carcinoma. Thus a second metastatic focus, if found, could add to the existing knowledge to distinguish between a cystic squamous cell carcinoma and the so-called branchiogenic carcinoma, especially when the primary could not be found.

Key words: Cystic squamous cell carcinoma, Branchiogenic carcinoma, Spinal metastasis, primary of unknown origin, Cervical metastasis