Advanced breast cancer systemic therapy

**METAPLASTIC BREAST CANCER: A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS**

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**Background:** Metaplastic breast carcinoma (MBC) is a very rare (0.08-0.2% of all breast malignancies) group of neoplasms characterized by differentiation of the neoplastic epithelium into squamous cells and/or mesenchymal elements. Comparing to infiltrating ductal breast carcinoma is more likely to present with locally advanced disease and poor outcome.

**Methods:** A retrospective analysis of all MBC treated in our Oncology Department from January 1999 to February of 2011 was done. The aims were to evaluate clinical and pathological characteristics, disease-free survival (DFS) and overall survival (OS). DFS was measured from time of surgery until progression or last follow-up and OS from time of diagnosis until death or last follow-up by Kaplan-Meier method.

**Results:** A total of 18 female MBC pts with a median age of 59 years (30-79yrs) were evaluated. The main metaplastic component was squamous in 11 pts, 1 pt had condroid differentiation and 4 pts had mixed components. 15 MBC were triple negative, 1 was HER-2 positive and 2 ER positive. Staging at diagnosis: 3 pts stage IA, 10 pts IIA, 3 pts IIIA and 2 pts IIIB. Axillary nodes were involved in 4 pts. Neoadjuvant chemotherapy (CT) was administered to 4 pts: anthracyclines (partial response in 3 pts, stable disease in 1), taxanes (stable disease in 1 pt, disease progression in 1 pt) and platinum-based CT (partial response in 1 pt). Adjuvant CT was administered to 13 pts with cyclophosphamide/epirubicin/fluorouracil in 9 pts, adriamycin/cyclophosphamide in 3 and cyclophosphamide/Methotrexate/fluorouracil in 1. All pts had surgery, 11 received radiotherapy and 2 hormonotherapy. Only 2 pts relapsed (1 with pulmonary and 1 with subcutaneous metastasis). 14 pts are alive in complete remission, 2 pts died (1 of disease progression and 1 of stroke) and 2 pts were lost to follow-up. After a median follow-up of 4 years, median OS and DFS were not reached. The 2-year OS and PFS rates were both 88%.

**Conclusion:** In our serie the MBC seem to have a good outcome but the small number of pts doesn’t permit to take any conclusion. Possibly in the MBC there are subtypes with better prognosis despite high grade, triple negative histology or lymph node involvement. Further studies are required to clarify the differences between the different subgroups.

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