Background: Digestive tract cancers (DTC) that represent within the most common malignant tumors in adults and elderly are rare in very young adults (VYA). They are frequently mis or lately diagnosed in this young population with more advanced and metastatic cases. We report a short Tunisia, of DTC in YA treated at the Salah Azaiez Institute of Tunisia.

Methods: Between January 2010 and December 2012, six cases of GIT in patients aged less than 25 years were retrospectively studied in the department of medical oncology in Salah Azaiez Institute.

Results: The median age was 19 years (15-24), with three female and three male. One patient had family history of GIT. The median time to diagnosis was 4 months. The most common presenting symptom was abdominal pain followed by changes in bowel habit. Dysphagia, abdominal mass and weight loss were less observed. Initial site was esophagus, stomach, small intestine in one case for each, left bowel in two patients and liver in the remainder. The histological type was confirmed in all cases by biopsy either of the primitive tumor or the metastasis. There were an adenocarcinoma in five cases and hepatocellular carcinoma in one case. The tumor was located in three cases, locally advanced in two cases and metastatic at the moment of diagnosis in the remaining patient. Three patients underwent initial surgery. Adjuvant chemotherapy was realised in 2 patients after surgery and concomitant radio-chemotherapy in the other case. In the cases of locally advanced or metastatic diseases, patients received palliative chemotherapy: LV5FU2, FOLFOX and GEMOX. Patient with adenocarcinoma of esophagus received concomitant chemo-radiotherapy. Patients with hepatocellular carcinoma received Sorafenib as second line treatment during three months. She progressed and palliative treatment was performed. Three patients still alive with median follow up of 12 months. The other patient died within 10 months.

Conclusion: Because of its rarity in this age group, few oncologists have experience with GIT and clinical trials will be needed for the development of standardized treatment protocols and prospective review.