A Study on Cervical Node Metastases from Unknown Primary Sites

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Between July 2008 and November 2012, we treated 4 patients with cervical node metastasis from unknown primary sites (CUP) and 1 patient suspected as having CUP.

Every patient who was diagnosed as having CUP underwent random biopsy, bilateral tonsillectomy, neck dissection and radiotherapy. No primary lesion was detected by the random biopsy or tonsillectomy.

Two patients died of distant metastasis and the other 3 patients are surviving, including 1 patient in whom investigation is ongoing. In all five cases, the histopathological diagnosis of cervical lymph node was squamous cell carcinoma. Extracapsular spread was found in 3 cases. The 2 patients who died of distant metastasis had invasion of the blood vessels.

Keywords: cervical node metastasis in unknown primary sites, neck dissection, radiotherapy, extracapsular spread

References


List of cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Nodal stage</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Dissected area</th>
<th>Positive lymph nodes</th>
<th>Irradiated area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Seventies</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>cN2b</td>
<td>ND+RT</td>
<td>II–III</td>
<td>Ila, III</td>
<td>Bilateral neck+PPS</td>
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<td>Fifties</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>cN2a</td>
<td>ND+RT</td>
<td>I–V</td>
<td>Ila</td>
<td>Ipsilateral neck</td>
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<td>I–V</td>
<td>Ila, III</td>
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<td>Sixties</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>cN2b</td>
<td>ND+RT</td>
<td>I–V</td>
<td>Ila, III</td>
<td>Bilateral neck+PPS</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Forties</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>cN2a</td>
<td>excisional biopsy</td>
<td>Unperformed</td>
<td>Ila</td>
<td>Unperformed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The diagnosis in case 5 is suspected: investigation is still ongoing.
ND, neck dissection; RT, radiotherapy; PPS, possible primary site

Histopathological diagnoses and course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nodal stage</th>
<th>Positive lymph nodes</th>
<th>Histology</th>
<th>Extra capsular spread</th>
<th>Muscle invasion</th>
<th>Blood vessel invasion</th>
<th>lymph vessel invasion</th>
<th>Neural invasion</th>
<th>Course</th>
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<td>Relapse-free survival</td>
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<td>Ila</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>–</td>
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<td>Relapse-free survival</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ila, III</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Died of distant metastasis</td>
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<tr>
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<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Under suspicion of emergence of primary site</td>
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