What is the Role of Adjuvant Therapy for Advanced RCC

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To date there is no proven role for the use of adjuvant therapy in RCC patients who have no known metastases but are at high risk for recurrence due to advanced local disease. Trials using interferons and high-dose IL-2 have not shown a survival advantage in this setting. However, there are now several active trials of targeted therapies, e.g. sunitinib and sorafenib, that are underway and deserve the interest of all urologists in completing these trials as soon as possible. In contrast, the role of cytoreductive nephrectomy, with the addition of adjuvant therapy for patients with proven metastases, has been proven by two large randomized trials in patients who received alpha-interferon after nephrectomy. This data has led to widespread use of this approach and has also led to the use of other agents (rather than interferon) in this setting. There is the significant need for clinical trials to document the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of targeted agents in this setting.