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Gliosarcoma: a clinical study.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE: Gliosarcomas are rare biphasic neoplasms of the central nervous system composed of a glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) admixed with a sarcomatous component. There are conflicting reports regarding their clinical aggressiveness. Four hundred and twenty-two consecutive patients with GBM were treated at our hospital between 1980 and 1999, among them 12 gliosarcomas. The goal of this study was to examine clinical features, treatment, survival and patterns of failure of gliosarcoma patients and to compare them with the entire group of GBM patients. This comparison was refined by a matched pair analysis with a group of 12 GBM patients selected for age, Karnofsky performance status, resection status, fractionation scheme and total dose (control GBM group). **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Seven gliosarcoma patients were male, five female, with a median age of 56 years (range 37-76 years). The median tumor size was 4.5 cm (range 3-8 cm). The locations, all supratentorial, included temporal in six, parietal in five, frontal in four and occipital in one patient. All patients underwent tumor resection followed by postoperative radiation therapy. **RESULTS:** Median survival was 11.5 months for the gliosarcoma group, 8.1 months for the entire GBM group (log rank test, $P=0.16$) and 11.0 months for the control GBM group (log rank test, $P=0.36$). All gliosarcoma patients had local tumor recurrences and died due to neurologic causes within 19.3 months after radiation therapy. **CONCLUSIONS:** With regard to clinical features, survival and patterns of failure, gliosarcomas and GBM cannot be distinguished clinically. Therefore, the same principles should be applied for the treatment of these tumors.

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