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Incidence of brain metastasis in patients with esophageal carcinoma.

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Abstract

AIM: To determine the incidence of brain metastasis in a contemporary group of patients with carcinoma of the esophagus.

METHODS: Retrospective analysis of 53 patients with esophageal carcinoma who received radiotherapy as a component of treatment between 1998 and 2007, including patient and tumor characteristics, and subsequent diagnosis of brain metastasis. The association between the histological type of esophageal cancer and the incidence of brain metastasis was assessed using Fisher's exact test.

RESULTS: Forty-four of the fifty-three patients in this study had adenocarcinoma and nine had squamous cell carcinoma, ranging from stage IIA-IVB. Primary treatment was surgery with neoadjuvant chemoradiotherapy (trimodality therapy) in 19% of patients; chemoradiotherapy in 42%; and surgery and adjuvant radiotherapy in 7%. Twenty-five percent of patients in this study received palliative radiotherapy. The overall incidence of brain metastasis in this cohort was 13%. Adenocarcinoma was the primary tumor histology in all of the patients who developed brain metastasis, representing an incidence of 16% in this subgroup. No patients with squamous cell carcinoma received trimodality therapy. The association between histology and brain metastasis was not statistically significant.

CONCLUSION: The incidence of brain metastasis in this contemporary cohort of patients with esophageal carcinoma is higher than previously reported and was confined to those with adenocarcinoma.

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