Ceruminous Adenocarcinoma: An Analysis of the Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) Database

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INTRODUCTION

Ceruminous adenocarcinoma is a rare malignancy involving the ceruminous glands in the external auditory canal. Its prognosis is thought to be poor, but this has been difficult to study due to the paucity of cases. Using a population-based national database, our objective was to describe patient demographics and survival trends to further elucidate management of this disease.

STUDY DESIGN

This is a cohort study using a national database.

METHODS

The SEER database was queried for patients diagnosed with ceruminous adenocarcinoma of the EAC between 1973 and 2010. Data analyzed included patient demographics, treatment modality, and survival. Patients were divided into two groups: 1) surgery only, and 2) those treated with postoperative radiation. A log-rank p-value and proportional hazards model was used to compare groups.

RESULTS

Twenty-two patients were identified in the database. The average age of diagnosis was between 60-64 years. Staging was known for four patients. All of the patients underwent surgical resection of the primary malignancy. Eight (36%) also had postoperative radiation. These patients survived fewer months compared to the surgery-alone group, but this was not significant (p=0.252). Nine patients (41%) were still alive with an average survival of 157 months since diagnosis. Two (9%) died of their malignancies, with an average survival of 45 months, while eleven (50%) died of other causes.

DISCUSSION

Use of a national database is helpful in elucidating the behavior of uncommon diseases. The absence of staging information is not unexpected since there is no standard staging system for this malignancy. Some providers use TNM staging for EAC squamous cell carcinoma as a default.

In our data, patients treated with postoperative radiation had shorter survival times. This may be due to confounders (e.g. advanced disease) that may have encouraged multi-modality treatment. Overall, patients treated with ceruminous adenocarcinoma of the EAC appeared to have more favorable survival than previously thought.

REFERENCES