Surgical Outcomes of Parotid Cancer: 10-Year Experience

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Introduction

Malignant tumors of the parotid glands are unusual. It comprises 0.5% of all tumors and less than 5% of head and neck cancers. Most of the patients are over 60 years when first diagnosed with no difference in distribution. Various histopathologic are encountered within this entity, the most common being the mucoepidermoid carcinoma. Others are adenocarcinoma, adenoid cystic carcinomas, acinic cell carcinoma, unclassified malignant tumors, and squamous cell tumors. There are numerous theories concerning its pathogenesis, but none proved to be clearly significant. The treatment of choice for parotid cancer is surgery and postoperative radiation therapy may be required when indicated. Many have reported in the past regarding various prognostic factors for parotid gland, and most agree that stage and grade of the tumor are important factors. From the previous studies, the disease-specific survival rate ranges from 47% to 78% depending on the follow-up time. These numbers must be appreciated by regarding specific characteristics of the patient within the context of stage, percentage of high-grade tumors, and corresponding treatment criteria. Herein, we intend to renew our experience in the treatment of malignant parotid tumors and to evaluate the oncologic outcomes.

Materials and Methods

99 patients who underwent primary surgery for parotid cancer 1. Retrospective study 1 From January 1991 to December 2008. 2. Treated at Yonsei Head and Neck Cancer Clinic, Seoul, South Korea. 3. Patients with metastatic tumors (4 cases), malignant lymphomas (2 cases), history of previous surgery (2 cases), incomplete clinical data (1 case) were excluded. 4. Male: Female = 56:42. 5. Age range = 49.9 years (range 12-88 years). 6. Right: Left = 48:52. 7. Mean follow period = 47.7 months (range 4-110 months).

For statistical analysis, SAS version 9.1.3, SAS institute, Cary, NC, USA were used. Logistic regression was done to evaluate possible risk factors. For survival analysis, Kaplan-Meier, Log-Rank and Cox regression were done. Statistical significance was defined as p < 0.05.

Discussion

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Conclusions

Parotid cancers are rarely encountered, with diverse pathological manifestations. In terms of oncologic results, our data shows satisfactory survival rates. In terms of functional results, the most common complication was transient facial palsy. (less than 4 weeks duration) Our experience is comparable with the results of the literature regarding the treatment of malignant parotid tumors. The limitations of our study, however, would be that this was a retrospective study with relatively small group numbers and with relatively short follow-up period.

References