Multimodal treatment strategies for locally advanced rectal cancer.

This review outlines the important multimodal treatment issues associated with locally advanced rectal cancer. Changes to chemotherapy and radiation schema, as well as modern surgical approaches, have led to a revolution in the management of this disease but the morbidity and mortality remains high. Adequate treatment is dependent on precise preoperative staging modalities. Advances in staging via endorectal ultrasound, computed tomography, MRI and PET have improved pretreatment triage and management. Important prognostic factors and their impact for this disease are under investigation. Here we discuss the different treatment options including modern tumor-related surgical approaches, neoadjuvant as well as adjuvant therapies. Further clinical progress will largely depend on the broader implementation of multidisciplinary treatment strategies following the principles of evidence-based medicine.