Abstract:

Background: While elderly patients with brain metastases from lung cancer appear to have an unfavorable prognosis, little information is available on disease presentation and treatment outcome in very young patients. Patients and Methods: Retrospective evaluation of radiation therapy in this particular subpopulation. The database with 149 lung cancer patients contained 9 patients aged <40 years. The majority received whole-brain radiation therapy with 30 Gy in 10 fractions plus steroids, with or without other local or systemic measures according to the institutional policy. Results: Five patients had small-cell histology. Median Karnofsky performance score was 70. In 6 cases, brain metastases were present already at first diagnosis. Eight patients had multiple lesions. Of 8 patients with complete follow-up, only 1 died from spread to the central nervous system (CNS), all others from extracranial disease. Maximum survival was 26 months (median 7 months). Conclusion: Very young patients with brain metastases did not achieve a better outcome than intermediate age groups. Radiation therapy was able to provide durable CNS control in nearly all patients, while systemic failures remained the leading cause of death. Prospective studies on treatment intensification and quality of life in these patients appear warranted.

Stichworte:

Radiotherapy; Brain metastases: prognostic factors; age; Lung cancer

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