Two recent meta-analyses demonstrated a significant influence of adjuvant as well as neoadjuvant cisplatin-based chemotherapy regimens on survival of patients undergoing radical cystectomy for bladder cancer. Therefore, the introductory question can be answered with "yes". However, while providing the best evidence available to date on the subject, both analyses are based on clinical trials of dubious quality. Thus, the question today is not whether perioperative chemotherapy is advantageous in some patients undergoing radical cystectomy, but rather which subgroups will actually benefit from additional systemic treatment. Instead of a detailed literature overview, this article discusses potential advantages and disadvantages of perioperative chemotherapy and outlines basic principles for the design of future studies investigating both strategies in bladder cancer.

Print-ISSN: 0340-2592

TUM Einrichtung: Urologische Klinik und Poliklinik

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