ASO AUTHOR REFLECTIONS

ASO Author Reflections: Defining Oligometastatic Recurrence in Biliary Tract Cancer

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PAST

Oligometastasis and oligometastatic recurrence can be successfully managed using locoregional therapy (LT), such as repeat surgical resection or radiotherapy, and are emerging topics in oncology research.^{1,2} However, these concepts have been ill-defined in biliary tract cancer (BTC). While the standard treatment for recurrent BTC is systemic chemotherapy offering approximately only 12 months,³ implementation of LT was reported to be associated with a benefit for selected patients with recurrent BTC.^{4,5} The present study was designed to identify patients who benefitted the most from LT for recurrent BTC, which might help to generate a clinically relevant definition of “oligometastatic recurrence” in BTC.

PRESENT

Our study evaluated 232 consecutive patients with recurrent BTC who initially underwent curative surgical resection between 1996 and 2015.⁶ Of these, 60 patients underwent LT and 172 patients did not. The multivariate Cox model identified carbohydrate antigen 19-9 levels > 50 U/mL, multiorgan recurrence, tumor number > 3, tumor size > 30 mm, and early recurrence (≤ 1 year) as independent predictors of poor survival after

recurrence. In the propensity score-stratified analysis, LT was associated with survival benefits in patients representing single-organ recurrence with 3 or less tumors and late-onset recurrence (> 1 year) (median survival time; 48.6 vs. 14.2 months). Given these, we propose that these patients may represent clinically relevant “oligometastatic recurrence” of BTC.

FUTURE

Our present study defines “oligometastatic recurrence” of BTC and serves novel selection criteria of LT, which can provide long-term survival for patients with recurrent BTC. Yet, to confirm the validity of our proposal, further external validation study would be required. Incorporating LT into treatment strategies for recurrent BTC may contribute to improving prognosis of BTC.

DISCLOSURES The authors report no conflicts of interest.

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