Adjuvant treatment, tumour recurrence and survival rate of uterine serous carcinomas: a single institution review of 62 women

Endometrial cancer today is not the low risk and early-stage cancer that it was previously considered to be. In South Africa, unusual tumour types of endometrial cancer, including serous (papillary) and carcinosarcomas, are common, and many patients present with advanced disease. Initial work using DNA sequencing demonstrated genetic differences between “type 1” and “type 2” endometrial cancer. These results now enable integrated genomic characterisation of different prognostic types, which is supposed to inform more appropriate treatment strategies.

Unfortunately, more aggressive postoperative multimodal adjuvant therapy has not been demonstrated to convey superior survival to less aggressive therapy. Therefore, the optimal management of both high-risk histology types and late-stage disease may include multimodality therapy, but it has been difficult to demonstrate a clear advantage for chemotherapy, so the work continues.

In a retrospective cohort study in this issue, the authors review their experience and attempt to detect differences in outcome that may suggest the superiority of one treatment modality over another. The guest editorial, written by Prof David Allen from Mercy Hospital in Melbourne, Australia, places the findings in context and assists our readers to interpret the findings.

Pharmacological options for the protection of ovarian function in patients undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy

The permanent loss of ovarian function is very common in older women who undergo chemotherapy for malignancy, but fortunately it is relatively uncommon in the very young. Pharmacological protection of the primordial oocytes seems to be an attractive option to improve our understanding of the determinants of follicle toxicity and to exploit the differences between the age groups. Retaining fertility potential and ovarian hormonal function are certainly highly important quality-of-life issues that are worthy of further exploration. We hope to extend the discussion to include alternative ways of protecting ovarian function and/or fertility for young women with cancer.

Case reports

We feature two case reports: two cases of rare gestational trophoblastic neoplasia and a case of metastatic cervical cancer presenting with a psoas abscess.

Greta Dreyer
Editor-in-Chief
E-mail: gretadreyer@mweb.co.za

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