



SKIN CANCER (OTHER THAN MELANOMA)

MERKEL CELL CARCINOMA IN A HOSPITAL OF HIGH COMPLEXITY IN CANCER OF CHILE

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Introduction: Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC) is a malignant proliferation of highly anaplastic cells which display nonspecific clinical features and its behavior is that of an aggressive tumor with a significant risk of reappearance after excision. Merkel cell carcinoma most commonly occurs to elderly people, and it has slightly more prevalence in women. Early recognition and adequate therapy are critical.

Objective: To characterize 34 patients with MCC between the years 2008 and 2014 that occurred in a hospital of high complexity in cancer in Santiago, Chile.

Materials and Methods: Retrospective study, demographic and clinical information are obtained from files and clinical record.

Results: The total of MCC was 34. Only 10% of the cases were diagnosed before the biopsy. Of the total, 22(65%) were female. Age ranged from 36 to 92 years with a mean of 69.1 (standard deviation 11.5). 24% presented a history of previous malignancy. The most frequent location was head/neck (36%) followed by lower extremities (30%). At diagnosis, 18(53%) had local disease, 10(29%) nodal disease and 6(18%) distant metastases. Of 20 patients, 70% presented a diameter smaller than 2cm. CK20 was performed on 27 patients, resulting positive in all of them. Of 23 patients who performed sentinel lymph node biopsy, 56% were positive. Of 10 complete lymphadenectomy performed, they presented nodal disease in 70%. PET CT performed in 14 patients showed metastasis in 50%, with distant disease in 72%.

Conclusions: MCC was more frequent in elderly people and women, being rarely suspected before the biopsy. The most frequent location was the head, presenting metastasis (nodal or distant) in half of the cases. Of those who underwent complete lymphadenectomy, the most of them presented nodal disease. PET CT was positive in half of the cases.

