



SKIN MANIFESTATIONS OF INTERNAL DISEASE

CUTANEOUS METASTASES OF INTERNAL MALIGNANCIES IN SOUTHERN TAIWAN

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Introduction: Skin metastases from visceral malignancies occur in 0.6% to 10.4% of all patients with internal malignancies. These may be difficult to be diagnosed because of the variable clinical presentations and can lead to a delay of management.

Objective: To determine the clinical features and the origin of cutaneous metastasis of internal malignancies in patients from a tertiary hospital in Southern Taiwan.

Materials and Methods: We analyzed the data of patients with biopsy-proven cutaneous metastases from internal malignancies diagnosed during 2013-2018.

Results: The series consisted of 49 patients with a mean age of 62.22 years, and 57% were female. The skin metastases presented mostly with multiple lesions (57%), with the clinical morphology of nodules (63%), plaques (22%) and polymorphic (8%). The most common primary cancer among women was breast cancer (n=25), while in men was lung cancer (n=6). Other internal malignancies determined were colorectal, hepatic, pancreatic, salivary gland, gastric, prostatic, renal, and hypopharyngeal cancers. The top three sites of cutaneous metastases were the chest (55%), abdomen (18%), and scalp (16%). Cutaneous metastases were the initial manifestation of the internal malignancy in 12%. The mean duration between the diagnosis of cancer and cutaneous metastases was 41.30 months (range 1-175 months). Moreover, almost half (45%) of the patients died within a few months (mean of 9.32 months, range 1-36 months) after the diagnosis of cutaneous metastasis.

Conclusion: Cutaneous metastases were commonly present as asymptomatic multiple nodules with breast and lung being the most frequent primaries in our series and was the initial presentation in 12% of the patients. The appearance of skin metastasis usually heralds a poor prognosis. Thus, careful examination and skin biopsy are essential for proper diagnosis and management.

