

Long-term survival of nasopharyngeal carcinoma patients treated with adjuvant chemotherapy subsequent to conventional radical radiotherapy

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Abstract:

Purpose: To assess the long-term survival of patients with nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) who were treated with conventional radical radiotherapy (RT) followed by adjuvant chemotherapy. **Methods and Materials:** Ninety-one newly diagnosed patients with Stage III and IV (American Joint Committee on Cancer, 1988) NPC, seen at the University of Malaya Medical Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia between January 1992 and May 1997, were treated with RT followed by adjuvant chemotherapy. The tumor dose was 70 Gy delivered in 35 fractions, 5 fractions weekly. Three cycles of chemotherapy, each consisting of 5-fluorouracil, 1 g/m²/d on Days 1-4 and cisplatin 100 mg/m² on Day 1, were administered 3 weeks after RT completion. Thirty-six patients had Stage II, 10 had Stage III, and 45 had Stage IV disease (AJCC 1997 staging system). **Results:** After a median follow-up of 61 months, the 5-year overall survival rate for all 91 patients was 80.1%, the disease-free survival rate was 76%, and the locoregional control rate was 85%. The 3-year overall survival rate for Stage II was 94.3%; it was 80% for Stage III and 79.8% for Stage IV ($p = 0.0108$). The 3-year DFS rate for Stage II was 90%; it was 80% for Stage III and 65% for Stage IV. The rate of distant failure for Stage IV was 8.9%. **Conclusion:** Radical RT followed by adjuvant chemotherapy was effective in our patients with locoregionally advanced NPC. The long-term results appear encouraging, even for patients with Stage IV disease. This single institution experience deserves further investigation in prospective trials.

Author	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prasad, U. • Wahid, M. I. A. • Jalaludin, M. A. • Abdullah, B. J. J. • Paramsothy, M. • Abdul-Kareem, S.
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