



EDITORIAL

About this issue...

The diagnosis and management of struma ovarii¹

Four cases of monodermal cystic teratoma, consisting of thyroid tissue, are described in this short research report. Clinical features ranged from totally asymptomatic to large tumours with ascites and epithelial cancer markers (cancer antigen 125) correlated with tumour size and the presence of ascites. The pre-histology diagnosis remains problematic in this rare and interesting disease. Both hyperthyroidosis and malignancy are rare.

HER-2/*neu* expression status of epithelial ovarian cancer in Ibadan²

Expression of adhesion molecule epithelial cadherin and matrix metalloproteinase-9 in squamous neoplasia of the uterine cervix³

This issue features two basic science articles from the developing world which investigate the involvement of cellular genetic changes in gynaecological neoplasia. This basic science research has gained importance and clinical relevance in the era of biological medications targeting these genes.

The over-expression of the HER-2/*neu* proto-oncogene is one such a target, with a highly successful therapy already available and widely used in breast cancer. The status and involvement of the gene in epithelial ovarian neoplasms occurring in black women was the focus of a study performed in Ibadan which found involvement of the gene associated with serous histology and higher stage and grade.

The involvement of adhesion molecule, epithelial cadherin, and matrix metalloproteinases in maintaining tissue structure, preventing single cell detachment, independent survival and metastasis is interesting, and key in understanding the metastatic behaviour of cancer cells. However, in the current analysis of the involvement of these two genes in cervical pre-cancer and cancer, the authors found that both genes were involved early in the process of oncogenesis, rather than later at the time of metastatic behaviour.

Lymphovascular space invasion in early-stage endometrial cancer: adjuvant treatment and patterns of recurrence⁴

The authors searched early-stage endometrial cancer patients managed over a 10-year period to find 95 women with lymphovascular invasion in the primary tumour. Although all

patients were reported to be lymph node negative, only a quarter (23 of 95) had complete lymphadenectomy. Decisions regarding adjuvant radiation were taken using the usual risk factors, and then the recurrence patterns were studied and compared to histology and treatment. Histological risk factors, including deep invasion and cervical involvement, predicted a higher risk of recurrence, but radiation did not seem to prevent anything else than local recurrence. Cancer-specific survival in this cohort was excellent, contributing to the difficulty in improving outcomes with adjuvant treatment.

Palliative chemotherapy in recurrent carcinoma cervix: experience from a regional cancer centre in southern India⁵

This retrospective review describes surprisingly good responses to six cycles of salvage chemotherapy for cervical cancer recurrence. Single agent, docetaxel, in a larger dosage than usually described, i.e. 120 mg/m², rendered outcomes comparable to that of combination paclitaxel and cisplatin, but with lower toxicity. These results and the quality-of-life and health economic implications are potentially important to countries with a high burden of cervical cancer and able to offer salvage treatment, like South Africa.

Case report

A case of primary peritoneal carcinoma producing psammoma bodies concludes the issue.

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