

METASTASIZING SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA OF THE SKIN

P. Holló and B. Somlai

ABSTRACT

Metastases from carcinomas of the skin are rare.

During 1994-1996 six patients, 4 males and 2 females, aged from 52 to 94 years, were treated at the Department of Dermato-Venereology of the Semmelweis University of Medicine for metastasizing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin. After being operated for the primary tumors they developed metastases within 13 months. Presenting these cases, the authors discuss the main risk factors for metastasizing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin: the anatomical localization, thickness of the tumor, invasion of the subcutis, and the grade of dedifferentiation.

KEY WORDS

carcinoma, squamous cell, skin, metastases

INTRODUCTION

The incidence of cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma has increased. The most common localization of the primary cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma is the skin of the hands, arms, face, and neck. The majority of these tumors are easily cured by surgical treatment. The incidence of metastases is between 2% and 5%, usually in patients with primary tumor of the hands and face (1,2). The metastases develop consistently in the regional lymph nodes in 85% of the cases. Very rarely other organs can be seeded as well: lungs, liver, bones and the central nervous system.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

From 1994 to 1996 we treated 6 patients (4 men, 2 women) with metastasizing squamous cell carcinoma. They were between 52 and 94 years old, mean 71,5 years. In one case the metastasis and the primary tumor were diagnosed at the same time. The longest symptomless period lasted 13 months, the mean time until appearance of the metastases was 7 months. The data of the patients and the main histological features of their primary tumors are summarized in Table No.1. The tumors were classified according to the Broders grading (3). The metastases

