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Malignant bone tumors of the foot – a single-centre analysis of 29 patients

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Background:

Malignant tumors of the foot are rare and account for 4% of all musculo-skeletal tumors, including any histological tumor entity that also can affect the foot.

Methods:

We analyzed the data of 29 patients with malignant bone tumors of the foot (16 males; 13 females; mean age, 43 years; range, 10-77 years) who were registered within the Vienna Bone and Soft Tissue Tumor Registry since 1963. There were 23 (79%) primary tumors – including 10 (34%) chondrosarcomas, 5 (17%) Ewing's sarcomas, 2 (7%) osteosarcomas, and 6 (21%) others – and 6 (21%) metastases. The phalanges were affected in 7 (24%) patients, the metatarsals in 16 (55%) and the tarsus in 6 (21%) patients. The leading symptoms were swelling (48%) and pain (38%) with a mean duration of 16 months (range, 1-99 months). Surgical treatment consisted of 11 amputations, 4 en bloc resections, 2 ray resections, 2 debulking-procedures and 7 curettages. 3 patients underwent biopsy only. Adjuvant therapy included radiation in 2 patients and chemotherapy in 11 patients.

Results:

Mean follow-up of all patients was 66 months (range, 1-377 months). Surgical complications were encountered in 6 (21%) patients, of whom 3 infections (10%) required revision resulting in one secondary amputation of a toe and one secondary amputation of the foot. No patient with a primary tumor had metastases at the time of diagnosis. Two (7%) patients developed local recurrence after 5 and 10 months after surgery, respectively; both being treated with secondary amputation. One patient developed lung metastasis after 48 months. The respective 10-year overall survival rate of all patients was 63 percent.

Conclusion:

Our results confirm a potential risk for delayed diagnosis of primary malignant tumors of the foot. In case of adequate surgical and – whenever indicated – multidisciplinary treatment, however, oncological results may remain satisfying.

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