Author's response to reviews

Title: Radiation recall dermatitis with soft tissue necrosis after pemetrexed

Authors:

Christian Spirig (christian.spirig@kssg.ch)
Aurelius Omlin (aurelius.omlin@kssg.ch)
Giannicola D'Addario (giannicola.d'addario@kssg.ch)
Klaus-Dieter Loske (klaus-dieter.loske@kssg.ch)
Philipp Esenwein (philipp.esenwein@kssg.ch)
Jan Geismar (jan.geismar@kssg.ch)
Thomas Ruhstaller (thomas.ruhrstaller@kssg.ch)

Version: 4 Date: 19 December 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Madam, Dear Sir

I like to thank you for the comments in the reviewer’s report. I give you hereby a detailed point-by-point response to the concerns.

Comments from Francesca Russo:

- Abstract Page 2, line 8: “Due to a progressive disease...” → corrected to “Due to disease progression...”
- Page 3, line 3: “radiation recall dermatitis may develop also without prior radiation toxicity” → corrected to: “Radiation recall dermatitis may also develop without clinically apparent prior radiation toxicity.”
- Page 3, line 7: “…smoking history of 20 py...” → corrected to: “…smoking history of 20 pack-years”
- Page 3, line 18: “On treatment with local and systemic steroids the acute dermatitis resolved within three weeks” → corrected to: “The acute dermatitis resolved however within three weeks by applying local and systemic steroids.
- Page 3, line 21: “…the pulmonary metastases were progressive…” → corrected to: “…the pulmonary metastases progressed”
- Page 3, line 23: “…was offered to the patient…” → corrected to “…was proposed”
- Page 3, line 24: “…of 500mg/m2 was given 250 days (eight months) after…” → corrected to: “…of 500mg/m2 was given eight months after…”
- Page 4, line 3: “…could be detected clinically” → corrected to: “…was detected on clinical examination.”
- Page 4, lines 18-20: “The patient is alive 20 months after diagnosis of a metastatic non-small cell lung cancer and 10 months without therapy despite of progressive disease” → corrected to: “16 months after the chemotherapy had been stopped, the patient died of uncontrolled local infection and concurrent pneumonia.”
- Page 5, line 5-7: “We advocate therefore careful observation of the patients by experienced clinicians and considering the cessation of the treatment in case of new symptoms in the pre-irradiated area.” → corrected to: “Not only careful examination and assessment by experienced clinicians but also the awareness of recall dermatitis due to pemetrexed may prevent new cases occurring.”

Comments from Alessandra Baerz

- Please add a comment about those previous reports and a possibly correlation between dose of previous radiotherapy and the severity grade of radiation recall dermatitis. → I add in the conclusions: “There are two known previous cases with much less severe radiation recall dermatitis in patients treated with pemetrexed. (4/5) In the first case the patient had been treated 25 years before with an adjuvant radiotherapy for breast cancer before receiving second-line treatment with pemetrexed for a non-small cell lung cancer. In the other case, the patient had received cisplatine / pemetrexed after having received radiotherapy with 21 Gy for a mesothelioma. Indeed our patient had
received higher dose of radiation therapy, (39 Gy vs 21 Gy) and the interval between radiation therapy and exposure to pemetrexed was shorter (8 months vs 25 years) than the mentioned case. This may serve as a possible explanation for the massive reaction we observed.”

- Page 1, line 13: “…life threatening effects…” → corrected to: “…life-threatening effects”
- Page 1, line 19: The reference number in brackets which showed only Number 1, had been completed by adding reference 2 and 3.
- Page 1, line 21: Falsely cited references 2 and 3 had been replaced by references 4 and 5.
- Page 3, last line: “…the causative role of pemetrexed is confirmed” → corrected to: “…the causative role of pemetrexed is likely”

Concerning the written English, a native-speaker reviewed the case and made the text more fluent.

Christian Spirig