Reviewer’s report

Title: Transcatheter arterial chemoembolization improves the resectability of malignant breast phyllodes tumor with angiosarcoma component: A case report

Version: 1 Date: 17 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Jurij Kiefer

Reviewer's report:

I want to congratulate the authors on their interesting case report of giant phyllodes tumor in the breast, which was preoperatively treated with arterial chemoembolization to reduce the size of the malignant mass. Allow me to add some minor recommendations.

Abstract:

"Before surgery, follow-up CT showed 45.1% reduction in tumor volume."

I recommend rewriting the sentence as following: "The follow-up CT scan showed a 45% reduction in tumor volume."

Background:

"After resection of the primary tumor, the reconstruction generally includes skin grafting, which involves harvesting of skin from another body part of the patient; skin grafting may result in morbidity or be undesirable to patients (2)."

I certainly agree that skin grafting of breast or chest wall defects is undesirable and might impede immediate adjuvant radiation therapy due to prolonged healing. However, defects after mastectomy, even if involving the chest wall, can be safely reconstructed using local myocutaneous flaps (e.g., latissimus dorsi) or free flaps, which has been shown in numerous studies in the past two decades. These reconstructive procedures allow for an aesthetically appealing result and postoperative radiation without delay. As the usage of these widely available techniques does not mitigate the indication for TACE, the authors should mention this surgical option in the 'Background' and 'Discussion'.

Case presentation:

"Considering that the breast tumor was inoperable and that skin defects after mastectomy can be extensive, we performed preoperative intra-arterial infusion chemotherapy and embolization to shrink the tumor before mastectomy."
How did the authors define inoperability in this case? If the reason for inoperability is an extensive skin defect after resection, see comment #1.

"During the treatment procedure, fever and right chest pain at the tumor site were noted after chemoembolization, and symptoms resolved within 2 days."

I recommend to either leave out the term 'during the treatment procedure' or 'after chemoembolization' as both refer to the same timepoint within the neoadjuvant therapy course.

"However, the patient rejected this therapeutic opinion and was lost to follow-up for 2 months."

I recommend using the term 'option' or 'recommendation' instead of 'opinion'.

General recommendation:

Throughout the article, there are several minor misspellings, language, and grammar errors. The manuscript would benefit from additional proofreading.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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