



Preoperative chemotherapy in adenocarcinomas of the pancreatic head improves survival after pancreatectomy in initially resectable disease

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Objectives

Stage I adenocarcinomas of the pancreatic head are treated with surgery and postoperative chemotherapy. In contrast, stage II is treated with preoperative chemo-radiotherapy and surgery. There are studies that apply preoperative chemo-radiotherapy in patients with stage IB. The aim of this study was to investigate the efficacy of preoperative chemotherapy without radiotherapy in patients with stage IB.

Methods

Twelve consecutive patients with resectable adenocarcinoma of the pancreatic head (stage IB) were studied. After presenting the preoperative chemotherapy protocol that is applied in our center, six patients decided to undergo surgery and postoperative chemotherapy (group A), while the remaining six chose to undergo preoperative chemotherapy and then surgery (group B). Among others, overall survival and disease-free survival time were measured. The minimum, median and maximum follow-up period were 139, 370 and 772 days, respectively.

Results

All patients in group B completed their chemotherapy protocol. The two-year actuarial survival time of patients in group A and B was 20% and 65%, respectively. The actuarial biennial disease-free survival time was 20% and 60%, respectively.

Conclusions

Preoperative chemotherapy in initially resectable pancreatic adenocarcinoma (stage IB) possibly leads to increased patient survival.