

Research paper 8

Metaplastic breast carcinoma: analysis of clinical and pathologic characteristics

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Introduction and objectives: Metaplastic breast carcinoma (MBC) is a rare, aggressive entity accounting for less than 1% of breast malignancies. It is characterized by the differentiation of neoplastic cells towards squamous and/or mesenchymal elements and has a poor prognosis due to its triple-negative status. The objective of the study was to analyse the clinicopathological characteristics of MBC in a tertiary care setting.

Method: The records of all cases diagnosed with MBC within one year (02/2020- 02/2021) at the Unit were reviewed.

Results: Out of 88 breast malignancies diagnosed during the period, five were MBC (5.68%). The mean age at presentation was 47 years (34-62). All MBC presented as painless lumps and were BIRADS 5 on radiology. The mean tumour size was 52 mm (25-95). All tumours were of histological grade 3. Four were biphasic tumours, while one was monophasic with pure squamous elements. Squamous (4/5), sarcomatoid (3/5), rhabdoid (1/5) and chondroid (1/5) areas were seen. Two tumours had invasive carcinoma of no special type (NST) elements, 40% and 70%, respectively. None had lymphovascular or perineural invasion. Two (2/5) patients had axillary node involvement at presentation. The mean NPI was 5.6 (4.5-7.2). Four (4/5) tumours were triple-negative, while one showed hormone receptor positivity. One patient developed a local recurrence after 10 months, following eight cycles of chemotherapy.

Discussion and conclusion: MBC in our setting appears to show a higher incidence and a younger age at presentation. As the data available from our study is limited, we need to study a larger series of patients with survival data for better understanding of the behaviour of this aggressive breast cancer.

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