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Update on improving nasopharyngeal carcinoma staging and prognostications

Nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) is a significant health burden in Asia, especially southern China. Accurate staging and prognostication is a fundamental step in patient management. Among the various prognostic factors, the tumor-node-metastasis (TNM) staging, jointly adopted by the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), remains the most robust system for global application. Continual refinements are needed because of advancements in diagnosis and treatment and increasing evidence for incorporating non-anatomical factors.

In preparation for the coming 9th Edition of the AJCC/UICC Staging System, we have organized a comprehensive study composing of the following:

Part 1. We conducted a systematic review to synthesize international evidence on prognostic factors and changes suggested to improve the current 8th edition TNM classification for NPC. Of 5,595 studies reported in the literature between 2013 and 2019, 108 studies (89,014 patients) showed potentially important suggestions.

Part 2. We performed a retrospective analysis on 4882 NPC patients staged and treated with contemporary methods during 2014-2015 from 8 representative major centers in Mainland China and Hong Kong. The primary outcome is Overall Survival (OS). Independent significant prognostic factors, both anatomical and non-anatomical were identified.

Part 3. The preliminary findings based on the above studies were summarized and a Delphi survey was sent to key investigators from each center, together with designated leaders from AJCC and UICC. Consensus on changes to be recommended for the 9th edition were built basing not only on the best available evidence, but also optimal balance in clinical practicability and global applicability.

Part 4. Following the confirmation of changes for TNM parameters, the value for incorporation of non-anatomical independent significant factors will be studied.

The latest progress regarding the development of the 9th Edition AJCC/UICC staging classification for NPC will be presented.

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改善鼻咽癌分期和预测的最新进展

鼻咽癌(NPC)在亚洲是一个重大的健康负担，尤其是在中国南方地区。准确的分期和预测是患者管理的基本步骤。在各种预后因素中，美国癌症联合委员会(AJCC)和国际癌症控制联盟(UICC)均采用的肿瘤-淋巴结-转移(TNM)分期仍然是被全球范围内应用的最可靠的系统。由于诊断和治疗的进步，以及纳入非解剖因素的证据越来越多，该系统仍需要不断改进。

为了准备即将到来的第9版AJCC/UICC分期系统，我们组织了一项综合研究，包括以下内容：

第一部分。我们进行了系统回顾，以整合有关预后因素的国际证据，和针对当前第8版鼻咽癌TNM分期的建议。在2013年至2019年间文献报道的5,595项研究中，108项研究（89,014名患者）显示了潜在的重要建议。

第二部分。我们对2014年至2015年期间，来自中国内地和香港8家具有代表性的医学中心的4882名被分期和治疗的鼻咽癌患者进行了回顾性分析。主要研究指标是总生存期(OS)。确定了解剖学和非解剖学上的预后独立影响因素。

第三部分。总结了基于上述研究的初步调查结果，并将德尔菲调查表发送给每家中心的主要研究者，以及AJCC和UICC指定的领导人。第9版推荐的变更共识，不仅基于现有的最佳证据，而且还是临床实用性和全球适用性的最佳平衡。

第四部分。在确认TNM分期参数的变化后，将继续研究这些非解剖学独立影响因素的价值。

本次讲座将介绍第9版AJCC/UICC NPC分期分类的最新进展。