New, less toxic radiotherapy technique specifically targets cancerous tissue

Published on February 24, 2012 at 11:13 AM · No Comments

Researchers at the University of Granada and the university hospital Virgen de las Nieves in Granada have developed a new radiotherapy technique that is much less toxic than that traditionally used and only targets cancerous tissue.

This new protocol provides a less invasive but equally efficient cancer postoperative treatment for cases of cancer of the oral cavity and pharynx.

The study -conducted between 2005 and 2008- included 80 patients diagnosed with epidermoid cancer of the oral cavity and pharynx, who had undergone lymph node removal. The affected nodes were located by the surgeon during the intervention and classified into different risk levels. Classification allowed physicians to target the areas at a higher risk of recurrence. This way, neck areas at a lower risk of containing residual cancer cells were not irradiated. Researchers achieved both to minimize the side effects of radiotherapy, and to reduce treatment discontinuation, thus achieving the therapy to be more effective.

A Highly Toxic Treatment

Over 70% of oral and pharynx cancer treated with surgery require supplementary treatment with radiotherapy occasionally associated to chemotherapy, because of the high risk for recurrence and spread through the lymph nodes. Radiotherapy and chemotherapy are highly toxic, mainly due to the ulceration of the mucous membranes lining the oral cavity; toxicity leads may patients to stop the treatment, which significantly reduces the chances of cure.

By using the risk map obtained with the collaboration of the surgeon and the pathologist, an individualized treatment was designed and adapted to the specific risk level of recurrence in each neck area. The volume of tissue irradiated was significantly smaller than that usually irradiated with traditional techniques.

Continued on Next page >>

Posted in: Medical Procedure News | Medical Condition News
Tags: Cancer, Chemotherapy, Hospital, Oncology, Pathology, Radiology, Radiotherapy

Comments

The opinions expressed here are the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of News-Medical.Net.

Latest News

Tips for people to ensure heart health
Activists protest Novartis challenge to Indian patent law

Quirky Comment Title