12th International Conference on HEMATOLOGY AND HEMATOLOGICAL ONCOLOGY & 6th International Conference on HIV/AIDS, STDS AND STIS

October 29-30, 2018 | San Francisco, USA

Adenocarcinomas of unknown origin

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Ancers of unknown origin prove to have unique and concerning characteristics. They are often seen to metastasize early in an aggressive and unpredictable pattern leading to difficulties in treatment. Advancements in immunohistochemistry staining and genetic testing both prove to be useful tools in identifying the origin of the metastasis. The two patients discussed in this case study both presented with metastatic cancer that was classified as adenocarcinoma cancers of unknown origin. Patient A is a 51-year-old Caucasian female with a past medical history of smoking, chronic bronchitis and pneumonia who presented after an incidental finding on a chest x-ray of a 2cm that was determined to be either a pericardial mass or a left lingular mass. A CT scan depicted a 2cm hemispherical mass at the lateral aspect of left ventricle extrinsic to the myocardium. Positron Emission Tomography showed only the mass of concern with hypermetabolic activity with SUV ranging up to 8.5. Patient B is a 46-year-old Caucasian female with no significant past medical history who presented for a surgical consultation of a left neck lump. A fine needle aspiration biopsy indicated a poorly differentiated adenocarcinoma. PET scan demonstrated a single focal area of increased metabolic activity in the right mandible, and malignant adenopathy in the left supraclavicular region, mediastinum, and retroperitoneum with SUV value up to 11.3. Immunohistochemistry was positive for CK7 and Gata 3 and negative for CK20, TTF-1, p40, PAX-8, mammaglobin, GCDFP15, ER, and uroplakin. Pathology stated the differential diagnosis for the primary site included: salivary glands, lung, breast, urothelium, cutaneous, and pancreatobiliary tumors. Patients presented in this case study were part of the 2-9% of cancer patients with the diagnosis of cancer of unknown primary origin. This study aims to serve as a meta-analysis of diagnostic and management methods for this population.

Biography

Chandni Bheeman is a third-year medical student. She strives to be a life-long learner and continually looks for new opportunities that motivate her to research into the cutting edge fields of medicine.

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