

Innovative Palliative Treatment in Advanced Head and Neck Cancer

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ABSTRACT

Background: Head and neck cancer is one of the ten most frequent cancers in the world. However, early diagnosis followed by an adequate treatment plan is crucial for a successful treatment and the best outcome. **Method:** This is a case report of an unknown primary in the head and neck that evolved catastrophically in 6 months due to inadequate medical management and sluggishness in the process of having the patient see a specialist within the public health system in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. **Results:** We justify this case report based on the negative impact on the prognosis of the patient and the outcome of an innovative palliative approach to his disease by means of a minimal invasive technique combining high intratumor injections of cisplatin (CDDP) and local hyperthermia produced by laser-induced thermal therapy (LITT). In addition to the treatment proposed (CDDP-LITT), the patient had regular follow-up by a multidisciplinary professional group (surgeons, oncologists, radiotherapists, nurses, psychologists, social work, and nutritionist) and a designated support team for home care. The association of an innovative minimal invasive treatment (CDDP-LITT) and support of a multidisciplinary group of professionals focused in palliative care reflected on this patients' outcome. However, this multidisciplinary model proposed by our institution may have a potential to impact quality of life and overall survival for these patients with incurable disease only if confirmed in a larger cohort of patients.

Key Words: Head and neck cancer, palliative treatment, intratumor chemotherapy, infrared laser hyperthermia, home care