Clinico-pathological Review of Malignant Gastric Tumours in Lagos, Nigeria

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Abstract

Background: Gastric cancer is one of the most common cancers and the 2d most common cause of cancer deaths worldwide. Contrary to earlier reports from Africa, prevalence of this cancer has been found to be comparable to that of other parts of the world.

Objective: To describe the clinico-pathological features of gastric cancer diagnosed in Lagos and determine the prevalence of H. pylori infection in gastric adenocarcinoma.

Methods: This was a retrospective histopathological study of all gastric cancer seen between 1995 and 2007 in the Morbid Anatomy Department of Lagos University Teaching Hospital as well as two other private histopathology laboratories in Lagos (2002-2007). The blocks and slides of gastric cancer tissue were the materials used for the study. The patients’ bio data and relevant clinical details were extracted from the demographic records.

Results: There were 105 cases of gastric cancer (M:F = 2:1, mean age-55.3 years), 81% of which occurred above 45 yrs. There were 95 cases (90%) of adenocarcinomas, 8 (7.6%) mesenchymal tumours with one case each of small cell non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma and carcinoid tumour. H. pylori was detected in 15.5% of 45 cases of adenocarcinoma with 36% showing evidence of chronic gastritis in adjacent non cancerous gastric tissue. All patients with clinical data had one or more alarm features; most recurring being abdominal fullness, recurrent vomiting, anorexia and weight loss.

Conclusion: This study suggests that gastric malignancies are not uncommon in Lagos and often manifest with alarm features which should raise a suspicion particularly in our setting with poor diagnostic endoscopic facilities.