Pattern and Clinical Predictors of Lymph Node Involvement in Neuroendocrine Neoplasms of the Pancreas

Stefano Partelli1, Rim Cherif3, Letizia Boninsegna1, Sebastien Gaujoux3, Stefano Crippa1, Anne Couvelard4, Aldo Scarpa2, Alain Sauvanet3, Philippe Ruszniewski5

1Department of Surgery, University of Verona, Verona, Italy
2Pathology, University of Verona, Verona, Italy
3Department of HPB Surgery – PMAD, Hopital Beaujon - Clichy - AP-HP
4Department of Pathology, Hopital Beaujon - Clichy - AP-HP
5Gastroenterology - Hopital Beaujon - Clichy - AP-HP

Background: Pancreatic neuroendocrine neoplasms (PNENs) are often indolent without pathological lymph node metastasis (pN1). Therefore, in patients with low risk of pN1, a lymphadenectomy could be avoided. Aim of this study was to construct a model for predicting the risk of pN1 prior to surgical resection.

Methods: Databases from the University of Verona and the Beaujon Hospital were queried. Data of all patients with resected (R0 or R1) non-functioning PNEN between 1993 and 2009 were analyzed.

Results: Data were analyzed for 194 patients. Metastases were present in the dissected lymph nodes of 58 patients (30%). The 5-year disease free survival for pN1 patients was significantly lower than for pN0 (66% vs 93%, P<0.0001). Multivariable analysis suggested the independent predictors of pN1 were radiological nodal status (rN) (OR 3.4, P=0.008), localization in the pancreatic head (OR 3.4, P=0.002) and the degree of differentiation (G2 vs G1 OR 3.5, P=0.001). When the degree of differentiation was excluded, on multivariable analysis rN1 (odds ratio 4.1, P=0.001), localization in the pancreatic head (odds ratio 3.2, P=0.002), and radiological
size > 4 cm (odds ratio 2.5, P=0.012) were independent predictors of pN1.

**Conclusion:** Patients with PNEN-G1 of the pancreatic body, in the absence of radiological node involvement, have a low risk of pN1. If a preoperative cytological diagnosis is not achieved, radiological size of the lesion is a powerful alternative predictor of pN1.