

European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2013

Abstract Number: 5334

Publication Number: P2931

Abstract Group: 11.2. Pleural and Mediastinal Malignancies

Keyword 1: Pleura **Keyword 2:** Mesothelioma **Keyword 3:** Lung cancer / Oncology

Title: Characteristics of malignant pleural effusions. Review of one-year data from a large tertiary centre

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Body: Introduction: Malignant pleural effusion is a common finding in patients presenting late with stage IV lung cancer. It is associated with variable survival and high morbidity. Our study aimed to review the diagnostic tools, pathology and outcomes of the patients with malignant effusions. Methods: We retrospectively collected data of patients presenting with pleural effusion at the large tertiary centre over 1-year. Consecutive patients were selected from the multidisciplinary meeting and data was analysed. Results: 110 patients with effusion were selected and 70 had malignant pathology. The median age of patients was 75 (range 31-93) and 39 (55%) were male. Forty-three (61%) had right pleural effusion and 9 (13%) had bilateral effusions. Diagnostic aspiration was performed in 39 (55%) patients with positive cytology in 32 with sensitivity of 85%. Forty percent of patients had video-assisted thoracoscopy and pathological diagnosis was achieved in 65. Blind pleural biopsy was not utilised and 8% of patients had radiological diagnosis. Pleurodesis was performed in 22 (31%) and 18% of them has complications. Median survival was better in patients with mesothelioma at 325 days compared to lung cancer.

Aetiology of malignant pleural effusion

Pathology	Number	Median survival (days)
Adenocarcinoma	25	100
Squamous lung cancer	6	94.5
Small cell lung cancer	1	150
Mesothelioma	17	325
Breast Cancer	7	290
GI	3	120
Lymphoma	2	312
Unknown primary	4	20

Conclusion: Our data shows the variable prognosis in patients with malignant effusion. Better survival was seen in patients with mesothelioma, therefore early effective strategies are required for diagnosis and management.