



Oncological Emergencies for Intensive Care Patients

Essay

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of Master Degree in
General Intensive Care

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2017

Abstract

Introduction: Oncologic emergencies can occur at any time during the course of a malignancy, from the presenting symptom to end-stage disease. Although some of these conditions are related to cancer therapy, they are by no means confined to the period of initial diagnosis and active treatment.

Treatment requires systematic evaluation and early empirical antibiotics. Hypercalcemia of malignancy is the most common metabolic emergency in cancer patients. Non-specific clinical features may cause delay in diagnosis and increase morbidity and mortality.

Aims: The aim is to discuss oncological diseases in ICU regarding pathophysiology, complications, early detection and management.

Summary: Over the last 15 years, the management of critically ill cancer patients requiring intensive care unit (ICU) admission has substantially changed. High mortality rates (75-85%) were reported 10-20 years ago in cancer patients requiring life sustaining treatments, especially when mechanical ventilation was needed or in recipients of hematological stem cell transplantation.

Oncologic emergencies can threaten the well-being of almost any patient with a malignancy. Because these conditions span the chronologic spectrum of a disease's natural history, from initial presentation to late recurrence to end-stage disease, all clinicians should be familiar with the manner in which these conditions emerge, as well as understand the methods for their prompt assessment and treatment. Prompt identification and intervention in these emergencies can prolong survival and improve quality of life, even in the setting of terminal illness.

Keywords: Oncological, Emergencies, Intensive Care Patients, Management

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, thanks to **Allah** whose magnificent help was the main factor in completing this work.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to **Prof. Dr. Sherif Wadie Nashed**, Professor of Anesthesia, Intensive Care and Pain Management, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University; for his continuous guidance, valuable advice, support and kindness throughout execution of this work. It's great honor to work under his supervision.

I also wish to thank **Dr. Mostafa Gamal El Dien Mahran**, Lecturer of Anesthesia, Intensive Care and Pain Management, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University; for his direct supervision, continuous follow-up, kind guidance, constructive encouragement and his great effort with me throughout the whole work.

I would also like to thank **Dr. Heba Fouad Abd Elaziz Toulan**, Lecturer of Anesthesia, Intensive Care and Pain Management, Faculty of Medicine - Ain Shams University, for her help and valuable advice.

Last but not least, sincere gratitude to **My Family** for their continuous encouragement and spiritual support.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قالوا

سبحانك لا علم لنا
إلا ما علمتنا إنك أنت
العليم العظيم

صدق الله العظيم

سورة البقرة الآية: ٣٢

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List of Abbreviations

5-HT	: 5-hydroxytryptamine
6-MP	: 6-mercaptopurine
ADH	: Antidiuretic hormone
ALL	: Lymphoblastic leukemia
ANC	: Absolute neutrophil count
APACHE	: Acute physiology and chronic health evaluation
CHF	: Congestive heart failure
CO2	: Carbon dioxide
COX-2	: Cyclo-oxygenase-2
CSFs	: Colony-stimulating factors
CT	: Computed tomography
DMSO	: dimethyl sulfoxide
EBRT	: External beam radiation therapy
EKG	: Electrocardiogram
ESMO	: European Society for Medical Oncology
G6PD	: Glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase;
GVHD	: Graft versus host disease)
HSCT	: Hematopoietic stem cell transplantation
HV	: Hyperviscosity syndrome
ICP	: Intracranial pressure
ICU	: Intensive care unit

List of Abbreviations

IDSA	: Infectious Diseases Society of America ²¹
IGFs	: Insulin-like growth factors
Igs	: Immunoglobulins
ITDD	: Intrathecal drug delivery
IV	: Intravenous
LFT	: Liver function test
MM	: Multiple myeloma
MPM II	: Mortality probability models II
MRI	: Magnetic resonance imaging
MSCC	: Malignant spinal cord compression
Nd:YAG	: Neodymium yttrium
NRS	: The numerical rating scale
NSAIDs	: Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
PO	: Per OS
PS	: Performance status
PTHrP	: Parathyroid hormone-related peptide
PV	: Polycythemia vera
S.L.	: Sublingual
SAPS II	: Acute physiology score
SC	: Subcutaneous
SIADH	: Syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone

List of Abbreviations

SQ	: Subcutaneous.
SV	: Serum viscosity
SVC	: Superior vena cava
TLS	: Tumor lysis syndrome
TLS	: Tumor lysis syndrome
VAS	: Visualanalogue scales
VEGF	: Vascular endothelial growth factor
VRS	: Verbal rating scale
WBC	: White blood cell count
WBRT	: Whole-brain radiation therapy
WM	: Waldenström macroglobulinemia

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Introduction

Oncologic emergencies can occur at any time during the course of a malignancy, from the presenting symptom to end-stage disease. Although some of these conditions are related to cancer therapy, they are by no means confined to the period of initial diagnosis and active treatment (*Lewis et al., 2011*).

Management of critically ill cancer patients requiring intensive care unit admission has substantially changed. High mortality rates (75-85%) were reported 10-20 years ago in cancer patients requiring life sustaining treatments. Because of these high mortality rates, the high costs, and the moral burden for patients and their families, ICU admission of cancer patients became controversial, or even clearly discouraged by some. As a result, the reluctance of intensivists regarding cancer patients has led to frequent refusal admission in the ICU. However, prognosis of critically ill cancer patients has been improved over the past 10 years leading to an urgent need to reappraise this reluctance (*Thiery et al., 2007*).

Supportive care is an area of high importance in oncology and European Society For Medical Oncology (ESMO) published Clinical Practice Guidelines on the

management of a variety of issues: Management of oral and gastrointestinal mucosal injury, Central venous access in oncology, Treatment of dyspnea in advanced cancer patients, Prevention of chemotherapy and radiotherapy induced nausea, Erythropoiesis stimulating agents in the treatment of anemia in cancer patients, Management of cancer pain, Management of venous thrombo-embolism (VTE) in cancer patients, Cardiovascular toxicity induced by chemotherapy, targeted agents and radiotherapy, Management of chemotherapy extravasation (*Azoulay et al., 2011*).

Several complications of cancer may require critical care for palliative management. These include acute CNS disorders (e.g, spinal cord compression), severe metabolic disorders (e.g, hypercalcemia, tumor lysis syndrome), orthopedic disorders (e.g, pathologic fracture), urologic disorders (e.g, hematuria and acute obstructive uropathy), general surgical disorders (e.g, GI bleeding and intra-abdominal abscess formation), malignant effusions (e.g, pericardial effusion with cardiac tamponade), complications of chemotherapy and radiotherapy and rarely superior vena cava syndrome (*Conway et al., 2007*).

Treatment requires systematic evaluation and early empirical antibiotics. Hypercalcemia of malignancy is the

most common metabolic emergency in cancer patients. Non-specific clinical features may cause delay in diagnosis and increase morbidity and mortality (*Samphao et al., 2010*).

Increased awareness and improved prophylaxis have helped oncological diseases, their occurrence continues to present challenges to the practicing oncologist. Prompt recognition and the rapid institution of adequate therapy are essential to a successful outcome (*Howard et al., 2011*).

Aim of the Work

The aim is to discuss oncological diseases in ICU regarding pathophysiology, complications, early detection and management.

Chapter (1):

Admission Criteria for Oncological Patient to ICU

Over the last 15 years, the management of critically ill cancer patients requiring intensive care unit (ICU) admission has substantially changed. High mortality rates (75-85%) were reported 10-20 years ago in cancer patients requiring life sustaining treatments, especially when mechanical ventilation was needed or in recipients of hematological stem cell transplantation (*Khassawneh et al., 2002*).

Because of these high mortality rates, the high costs and the moral burden for patients and their families, ICU admission of cancer patients became controversial or even clearly discouraged by some authors. . However, prognosis of critically ill cancer patients has been improved over the past 10 years leading to an urgent need to reappraise this reluctance (*Thiery et al., 2005*).