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THE PATTERN OF EXTRACAPSULAR NODAL SPREAD IN CERVICAL METASTASIS

Thesis

Submitted for partial fulfilment of the requirement for the M.D.Degree

IN

Otorhinolaryngology

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This Work is Dedicated to My Family

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Introduction and Aim of The work

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Introduction and Aim of the Work

Although a nodal mass of abnormal proportions that appears in the neck may represent a lymphoma, adenocarcinoma or various metastases from remote sites, most such adenopathies in an adult population represent metastatic squamous carcinoma. Such masses are usually metastases from a primary tumour in the regional aerodigestive tract. In most cases the primary site is obvious and thus the otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeon is able to formulate a treatment plan that considers both the primary tumour with its extension (s) and metastases and the interrelationship involved. Saying that the neck is critical to survival in patients with aerodigestive squamous cell carcinoma (ADSC) is an understatment (Schuller, et al., 1980, Spiro, et al., 1974), although such factors as nodal multiplicity, bilaterality, and/or contralaterality are ominous, the affected neck is the most critical factor in this disease.

The radical or complete neck dissection described by **Crile** (1906) remained for years the surgical treatment of choice for carcinoma metastases to cervical lymph nodes from head and neck primary squamous cell carcinoma. The operation is designed on the Halsted concept of proper cancer treatment, which is based on the premise that successful cancer therapy requires complete

removal of the primary cancer, the intervening lymphatics, and the lymph nodes that serve the primary site.

The reported rate of recurrence of tumour in the neck following radical neck dissection ranges from 10 to 45 percent (Lingman, et al., 1977, Jesse, et al., 1978, McGuirt, et al., 1979). These rates are particularly alarming, because the survival rates drop to almost one fifth with the postoperative recurrence.

Extracapsular nodal spread is the most significant cause for tumour recurrence (Molinari, et al., 1980), and since a classical neck dissection operation removes between 70 and 90 neck nodes, the importance of identifying extracapsular spread in one of these nodes cannot be over-stressed, as in such a case post-operative radiotherapy is essential to effect tumour control.

Hitherto, identification of extracapsular spread is based on estimation of nodal size or fixation, the consensus remains that if the nodal diameter exceedes 3cm, extracapsular spread is assumed to have occurred (Snow, et al., 1982).

Obviously, it is likely that extracapsular spread could happen with smaller nodes and consequently remains unrecognised.

The aim of this work is to:

- (1) determine the prevalence of extracapsular nodal spread in the entire neck field.
- (2) Correlate extracapsular spread to some particularities of the primary tumour and its neck secondaries (differentiation, site, size......).

Review of Literautre

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