Using Urtica Dioica In Esophageal Cancer: A Report of a Case
M Aydin, A Aslaner, A Zengin

Citation

Abstract
Esophageal carcinoma has a unique and changing epidemiologic pattern. Geographic variation is remarkable and leading most to believe that environmental causes play a large role in the development of oesophageal carcinoma (1). Treatment is still surgery. Survival rates are not good besides surgery. Looking for good results, patients search for paramedical treatments. Urtica dioica is a plant commonly used for treatment by public in our country. A 65 year old man complaining with dysphagia admitted to our clinic. On investigations esophageal adencarcinoma was diagnosed. Patient did not feeding orally and there was no passage to stomach on both endoscopy and posteroanterior graphies. At laparotomy the tumor was irresectable, so gastrostomy applied to the patient. At the follow up of the patient, he was feeding orally at the sixth month postoperatively. Passage to stomach was present on both endoscopy and posteroanterior graphies. The using of urtica dioica after the operation by patient has learned.

INTRODUCTION
As the incidence of esophageal cancer is less, it has an important role because of its difficulty on treatment. Esophagus histologic structure and late diagnosis are the main causes for this. On recent years, improvements on technology allow early diagnosis of esophageal tumors. Because of that, the success on treatment is going to increase.

Primary choice of treatment is surgery. Insufficiency of surgery alone causes to increase the research about chemotheraphy and radiotheraphy. Chemotheraphy and radiotheraphy are used in advanced tumors to reduce the tumor size for good surgical results. In our country, paramedical treatments are using commonly by people in cases which enable to treat medically. Urtica dioica is a plant growing endemicly in many regions of Turkey. In our country, paramedical treatments were used for some such diseases (2,3,4,5,6,7). In our case a man following by our clinic who was using urtica dioica at home for inoperable esophageal cancer was represented.

CASE REPORT
A 67 year old man was admitted to a center complaining with dysphagia on November 2001. The esophageal tumor was diagnosed by the investigations. As seen during laparotomy, the tumor had invaded into the abdominal aorta and accepted as irresectable. Putting a stent or chemoradiotheraphy was suggested to the patient, but no acceptance of these treatments was achieved. He was discharged from the hospital. One year later, he admitted to our clinic. Esophagoscopy was performed. At the 40th cm, an ulcerovegetative mass protruding towards lumen of esophagus was seen. Endoscopic biopsy revealed as mucinous adenocarcinoma (Biopsy no:B-1886-02). In the Computerized Tomography (CT), thickening of 3 cm of distal segment of wall to 2cm was seen. Invasion to abdominal aorta was suspicious. So the patient operated for aiming curative surgery or gastrostomy. In the laparatomy, a mass about 15x20x10cm in diameters which derived from abdominal esophagus, fundus and proksimal corpus of stomach that invaded left lobe of liver and abdominal aorta was established. The tumor was accepted as irresectable and Stam gastrostomy was applied. Six months later, he admitted to our clinic, again. In the history, he has used gastrostomy for 1 month, then after this time he could swallow solid foods. In the endoscopic examination, appearance of the tumor was necrotic and the probe passed through stomach. Passage to stomach was easy in esophagogastroduodenography (Figure-I). In the deepened history, it was learned that, he drank 1500cc boiled urtica dioica a day, till 6 months after diagnosis. Now, the patient can feed easily and followed by our clinic without any...
clinical complaints. Gastrostomy was pulled. The patient is
still following by our clinic for tumor progression and any
sign of metastases.

**DISCUSSION**

While the esophageal cancer defined by radiologically, it
was enable to treat. It was notified that chemotherapy could
reduce tumor size about 10% to 40% (9). In recent studies,
chemotherapy with radiotherapy on the treatment of
esophageal cancer is more effective (9). Despite these
improvements, it was known that the treatment of stage IV
esophageal cancer is usually impossible because of distant
organ metastases and five years survival rates are 0% (9). For
this patient, it was declared that palliative treatments are the
standard methods to relieve dysphagia and other symptoms
(9). Chemotherapy to these patients is controversy.
Randomized studies showing no decrease on risk of
metastases with adjuvant systemic chemotherapy was
found (10,11). New researchs and treatment methods about this
subject were going on th chemotherapy, genetics and
immunotherapy (9). Urtica dioica is a plant growing
demically in our country. This plant is using by public in
lots of diseases primarily on advanced cancers. In scientific
studies, antiproliferative effect of urtica dioica on prostatic
cancer and rheumatoid arthritis was shown. Also, urtica
dioica detoxify the effects of some toxic substances on liver
was shown (2,3,4,5). In eastern part of Turkey, some studies
which showing the high prevalence of using urtica dioica in
cancer patients for alternative treatment, were made (12). In
our clinic, we observed a man followed for stage IV
esophageal cancer and is using urtica dioica. Our
observations were towards the positive effects of this plant,
urtica dioica. We conclude that, scientific quality and
quantity of this effect have to need further experimental and
clinical studies

**REFERENCES**

  Gastroenterol 2001;7:760-765
2. Davis PH, ED. Flora of Turkey and the east Aegean
  Islands. Edinburg Univ. Press. 1982;7: 633-635
3. Turkdosan MK, Ozbek H, Yener Z, Tuncer I, Uygan I,
  Ceylan E. The role of Urtica dioica and Nigella Satina in the
  prevention of Carbon tetrachrolide induced hepatotoxicity in
  rats. Phytotherapy Research. In press
4. Konrad L, Muller HH, Lenz C, Laubinger H, Aumuller G,
  Lichius JJ. Antiproliferative effect on human prostate cells
  by a stinging nettle root (Urtica dioica) extract. Planta Med
  2000; 66:44-7
5. Riehemann K, Behnke B, Schulze-Osthoof K. Plant
  extracts from stinging nettle (Urtica dioica), an
  antirheumatic remedy, inhibit the proinflammatory
6. Obertreis B, Giller K, Teucher T, Behnke B, Schmitz H.
  Anti-inflammatory effect of urtica dioica folia extract in
  comparison to caffeic malic acid.Arzneimittelforschung
  1996; 46: 52-6
7. Koch E. Extracts from fruits of saw palmetto (Sabal
  serrulate) and roots of stinging nettle (UD): viable
  alternatives in the medical treatment of benign prostatic
  hyperplasia and associated lower urinary tracts symptoms.
  2001;67:489-500
8. American Cancer Society
  
10. Ajani JA. Current status of new drugs and
  multidisciplinary approach e s in patients in patients with
carcinoma of the esophagus.Chest, 1998;113:112S
11. Ando N, Iizuka T, Kakegawa T. A randomized trial of
  surgery wit h and without chemotherapy for localized
  squamous carcinoma of the thoracic esop hagus. J Thorac
  Cardiovasc Surg. 1997;114:205
treatments used by patients with cancer in eastern
Author Information

Metin Aydin
Professor of General surgery, Duzce Medical Faculty, Abant Izzet Baysal University

Arif Aslaner
Assistant MD of General surgery, Duzce Medical Faculty, Abant Izzet Baysal University

Ahmet Zengin
Assistant MD of General surgery, Duzce Medical Faculty, Abant Izzet Baysal University