

Scientific research process

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Retrospective Study

Endoscopic ultrasound for early esophageal cancer: Are we denying patients neoadjuvant chemo-radiation?

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Our study, entitled, “Endoscopic ultrasound for early esophageal cancer: Are we denying patients neoadjuvant chemo-radiation?” was conceptualized through caring for esophageal cancer patients. In deciding what to do with patients that have been under-staged prior to surgery, we wanted to explore our institution’s experience with early esophageal cancer. We hypothesize that the concordance rate would be high between preoperatives staging with endoscopic ultrasound and final surgical pathology.

There were no experiments to perform as this was a retrospective review. After we obtained IRB approval, we created a database of patients who underwent surgery for esophageal carcinoma (other histologies were excluded) at our institution. Clinicopathologic factors and treatment were included in the database. Once the data was obtained the information was deidentified and statistical analysis was performed, which largely consisted of descriptive statistics.

This study had several surprising findings. We were surprised to find that EUS is quite inaccurate in early cancer. The use of PET in this setting did improve rates of accurate staging and we have routinely incorporated PET-CT in our preoperative staging of esophageal cancer patients. Also, we believe that more liberal use of endoscopic mucosal resection will potentially improve staging in early esophageal cancer and have employed EMR more frequently for patients with early esophageal cancer who are candidates in our practice.