

BREAST CANCER WITH ENDOBRONCHIAL METASTASES: A CASE REPORT

K-Y Hsu¹, C-T Wu², C-H Kuo¹, M-S Lin¹, C-J Chen¹

Department of ¹Internal Medicine, ²Pathology

Chia Yi Christian Hospital, Chia Yi, Taiwan

BACKGROUND: The lungs are among the most common sites of metastases from non-pulmonary malignancies. Metastases usually involve lung parenchyma or pleura. However, endobronchial metastases that are defined as primary involvement of the bronchial epithelium are rare.

CASE REPORT: A 51-year-old woman was diagnosed as breast cancer and received modified radical mastectomy of right breast in May 2002. The pathology revealed infiltrative ductal carcinoma with positive estrogen receptor (ER) and progesterone receptor (PR). She received one course of chemotherapy with cyclophosphamide, epirubicin and 5-fluorouracil. However she refused subsequent chemotherapy due to side effects. Hormone therapy with tamoxifen was given at our surgical clinic.

She began to suffer from intermittent cough and dyspnea with foreign body sensation in the throat in December 2005. Occasional hemoptysis was noted in April 2006. Chest radiograph (CXR) showed collapse of left low lobe. Bronchoscopy was performed, which disclosed a polypoid mass at the medial side of right main bronchus (Figure 1) and narrowing of right low lobe bronchus (Figure 2). Endobronchial biopsy was carried out on the 2 sites. The pathologic findings of the 2 samples were identical. The thyroid transcription factor-1 was negative. The ER and PR were strongly positive. The HER-2/Neu receptor revealed overexpression. In addition, these findings were compatible with those from previous breast tissue.

Under the impression of breast cancer with endobronchial and bone metastasis, she received chemotherapy with paclitaxel. The treatment is still ongoing.

CONCLUSIONS: Experiences from this case suggest that endobronchial metastasis should be taken into consideration for a patient with airway symptoms or abnormal CXR after the diagnosis of an extrapulmonary carcinoma or sarcoma. Bronchoscopic biopsy is mandatory for confirmation

Key words: Endobronchial metastasis, Breast cancer, Bronchoscopy