RADIOThERAPY AND HYPERThERMIA FOR PRIMARY CARCINOMA OF THE VAGINA

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology - Division of Gynaecology and Gynecologic Oncology, and Department of Radiation Oncology, Erasmus MC – Daniel den Hoed Cancer Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Objective
To evaluate the results of radiotherapy in patients with vaginal cancer.

Study design
A cohort of 44 patients (6 stage I, 23 stage II, 8 stage III and 3 stage IVa) treated between 1990 and 2002 with radiotherapy for primary vaginal cancer was assessed. Radiotherapy was given either alone (n=34), combined with chemotherapy (n=3), or with hyperthermia (n=7). Hyperthermia was added to radiotherapy in case of a tumour size > 4 cm in diameter for FIGO stage III disease. Survival rates and median survival were evaluated.

Results
The calculated overall 5-year survival of primary vaginal cancer was 63 %. High grade tumors had lower OS rates than low grade tumors (25% vs 61%). For FIGO stage II (n=23), 5 yrs OS was 59% and for FIGO stage III (n=8), this was 56%.

Discussion
In primary vaginal cancer, tumour stage is the major prognostic factor. In the NCDB report on cancer of the vagina, the 5 yrs overall survival was 58% for stage II tumours, and 36% for stage III-IV tumours [1]. The similar 5 yrs OS rates for stage II and III tumours in the popu-
lation studied by us may be related to the addition of hyperthermia to radiotherapy in patients with stage III tumours with a diameter larger than 4cm. The supplementary effect of hyperthermia to radiotherapy may be a feasible and beneficial approach to improve the treatment results of vaginal cancer.