

Pretreatment CA 15-3 levels do not predict disease-free survival in patients with advanced epithelial ovarian cancer

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ABSTRACT

Aims. To evaluate the role of pretreatment CA 15-3 levels as a predictor of disease-free survival in patients with advanced epithelial ovarian cancer.

Methods. A cohort of 65 patients with FIGO stage III or IV epithelial ovarian cancer was evaluated. Patients were treated either with primary cytoreductive surgery followed by adjuvant platinum-based chemotherapy or with neoadjuvant chemotherapy with interval debulking surgery. All patients had pretreatment CA 15-3 and CA 125 tumor marker determinations. The patients were divided into a group with elevated CA 15-3 and a group with normal levels. The two groups were compared with regard to clinical and survival measures.

Results. The patients' median age was 65 years (range, 37-90); 34 (52%) were at stage III and 31 (48%) at stage IV. CA 15-3 was elevated (>30 units/mL) in 44 (68%) patients, with a median level of 39 units (range, 4-2282). CA 125 was elevated (>35 units/mL) in 61 (94%) patients, with a median level of 947 units (range, 4-30,642). CA 125 and CA 15-3 levels were not correlated ($r = 0.015$, $P = 0.332$). The median follow-up was 22 months (range, 3-120 months). Fifty-three (81%) patients had disease recurrence and 43 (66%) died. Survival analysis showed that patients with elevated and normal CA 15-3 levels had similar recurrence-free survival ($P = 0.78$) and overall survival ($P = 0.55$).

Conclusions. Although elevated in the majority of patients with advanced epithelial ovarian cancer, CA 15-3 levels are not predictive of survival.

Key words: CA 15-3, ovarian cancer, survival.

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