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A Review of Hypofractionated Palliative Radiotherapy

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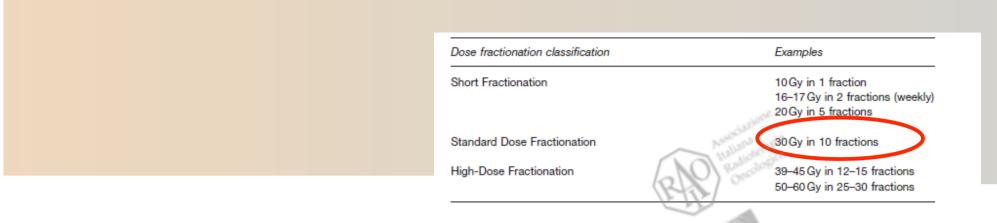
Radiotherapy commonly is employed to address symptoms in patients with symptoms caused by cancer. For this article, the authors reviewed data supporting the use of hypofractionated palliative radiotherapy. In addition to single-fraction treatment for painful bony metastasis, the available literature suggested that courses of 2 to 14 external-beam fractions may provide equivalent relief to longer course treatment in patients with a poor prognosis who have primary cancers of the lung, rectum, bladder, prostate, head and neck, spleen, and gynecologic system. Hypofractionated treatment delivers palliation that is time efficient, cost effective, and minimally toxic. Evidence suggests that the reluctance of radiation oncologists to provide single-fraction treatment acts as a barrier to referrals from palliative care professionals. Collaboration in education, research, and patient advocacy will advance the common objectives of the 2 specialties and lead to an appropriate increase in the use of palliative hypofractionated radiotherapy. *Cancer* 2007;109:1462–70. © 2007 American Cancer Society.

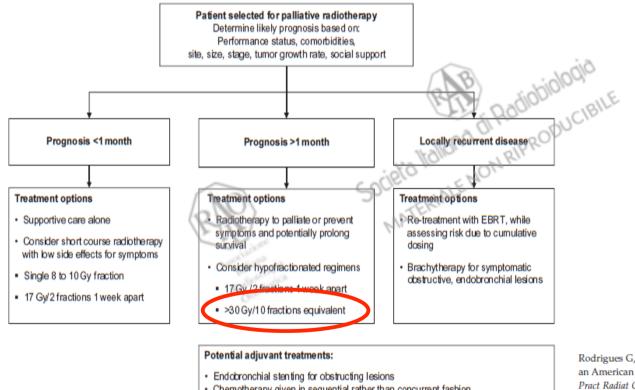
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- Chemotherapy given in sequential rather than concurrent fashion
- · Percutaneous gastric feeding tube in patients with swallowing difficulties
- · Medication or nerve root injection for intractable pain
- Palliative care or hospice consultation

Rodrigues G, Videtic GMM, Sur R, et al. Palliative thoracic radiotherapy in lung cancer: an American Society for Radiation Oncology evidence-based clinical practice guideline. Pract Radiat Oncol 2011; 1: 60-71.

Rodrigues G, Macbeth F, Burmeister B, et al. Consensus statement on palliative lung radiotherapy: Third International Consensus Workshop on Palliative Radiotherapy and Symptom Control. Clin Lung Cancer 2011; doi: 10.1016/j.cllc.2011.04.004

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Role of Radiation Therapy in Palliative Care of the Patient With Cancer

Stephen T. Lutz, Joshua Jones, and Edward Chow

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Treatment Options

Primary Site	Poor Prognosis/Performance Status	Average Prognosis/Performance Status
CNS	30 Gy in 10 fractions Temozolomide alone Supportive care alone	• 59.4-60 Gy in 30 to 33 fractions
Head and neck	 14 Gy in four fractions monthly to a total of 42 Gy 8 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone 	70 Gy in 35 fractions 50 Gy in 20 fractions
Breast	20-30 Gy in four to five fractions 8-10 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone	30 Gy in 10 fractions 50 Gy in 25 fractions
Lung	17 Gy in two fractions in 2 weeks 8-10 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone	 > 30 Gy in 10 fraction-equivalents Endobronchial brachytherapy for endoluminal obstruction
Esophagus	30 Gy in 10 fractions 24 Gy in three fractions 8-10 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone	 50 Gy in 25 fractions 50 Gy in 20 fractions
Genitourinary	 14.4 Gy in four fractions monthly to a total of 43.2 Gy 8-10 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone 	 30 Gy in 10 fractions 50 Gy in 20 fractions
Gynecologic	 14.4 Gy in four fractions monthly to a total of 43.2 Gy 8-10 Gy in one fraction Supportive care alone 	30 Gy in 10 fractions 50 Gy in 20 fractions

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AIMS

To assess the effectiveness of a SHort-course Accelerated RadiatiON therapy (SHARON) in the palliative treatment of patients with primary or secondary thoracic neoplasms, symptomatic, and not susceptible of surgery or radical radiotherapy

METHODS

A phase II clinical trial was planned based on optimal two-stage Simon's design.

Eligibility criteria included patients with an Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group (ECOG) performance status of ≤3 and an expected survival > 3 months.

Twenty-five patients were treated with radiotherapy

(total dose: 20 Gy, 5 Gy per fraction)

in 2 days with twice daily fractionation.

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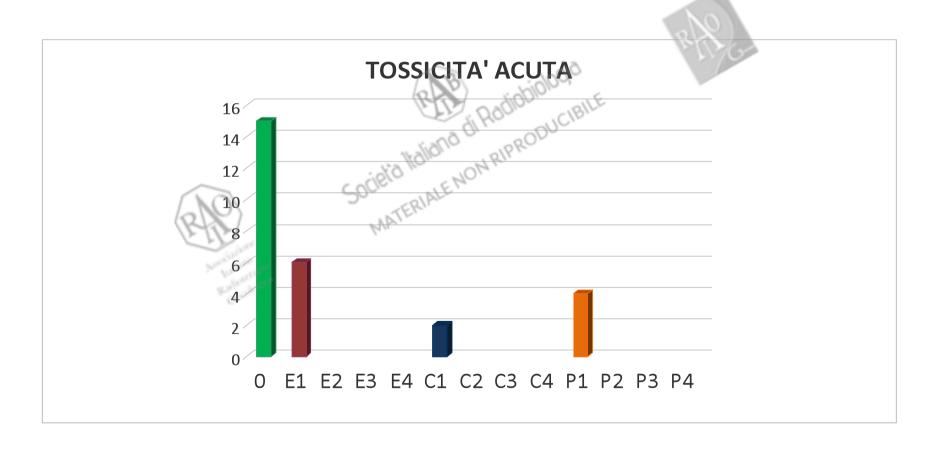
Two G1 skin (8%), 7 G1 haematological (28%) and 4 G1 pulmonary (16%) toxicities were recorded. No patient experienced G≥2 acute toxicities.

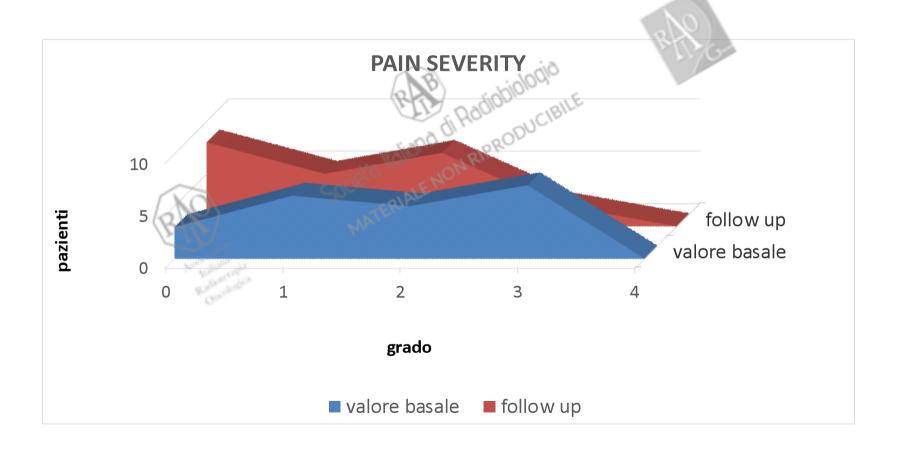
With a median follow-up time of 6 months (range, 1 to 16 months), of the 25 symptomatic patients, 24 showed an improvement or resolution of baseline symptoms (overall palliative response rate: 96%).

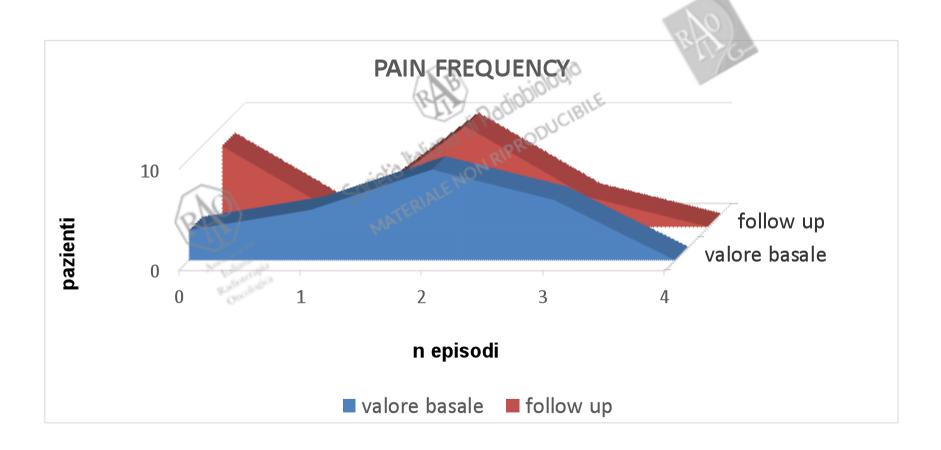
Three months overall survival was 87.5% (median survival time: 6 months; 95% CI 5.3-6.6 mo).

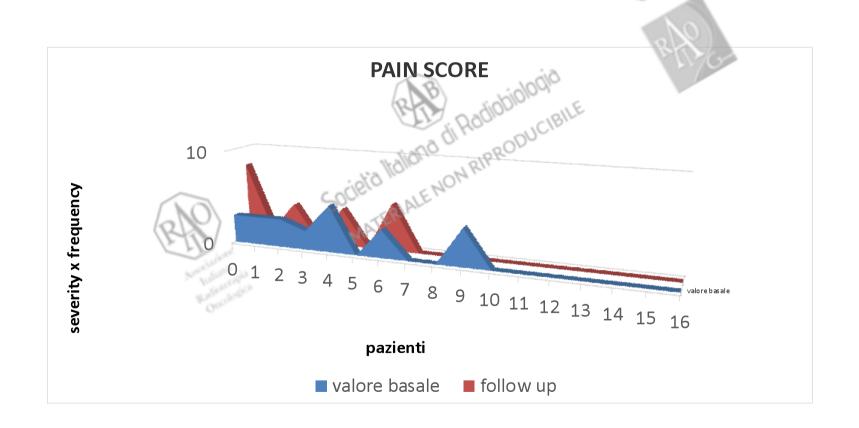
Median survival without symptoms progression was 3 months (95% CI: 2.2-3.7mo).

In 24 patients with pain, a significant reduction of this symptom was recorded in terms of VAS (5.0 vs 2.9, p=0.02).









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Short-course accelerated thorax radiotherapy (20 Gy in twice daily fractions, 2 consecutive days) is tolerated and effective in terms of symptom relief.

A phase III comparison against a standard palliative regimen (30 Gy in 10 fractions) has been planned in this patient population.



