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Clinical and safety profile of high-dose interleukin-2 treatment in elderly patients with metastatic melanoma and renal cell carcinoma - Abstract

Clinical and safety profile of high-dose interleukin-2 treatment in elderly patients with metastatic melanoma and renal cell carcinoma - Abstract**Published on 04-03-2013**

OBJECTIVE: High-dose interleukin-2 (IL-2) is effective immunotherapy for the treatment of metastatic melanoma and renal cell carcinoma (RCC) but has been contraindicated in elderly patients.

This study assessed the safety and therapeutic efficacy of high-dose IL-2 in patients ≥ 65 years of age with metastatic melanoma and RCC.

METHODS: A prospectively collected clinical database of 104 consecutive melanoma or RCC patients treated with high-dose IL-2 between 2009 and 2012 was used to compare clinical outcomes and adverse events in patients ≥ 65 years of age with those of younger patients.

RESULTS: There were 22 (21%) patients ≥ 65 years and 82 (79%) patients < 65 years of age. The mean number of IL-2 doses was lower in older patients during cycle 1 of treatment (7.2 vs. 8.6, $p = 0.012$). There were no other differences in dosing pattern by age group. There was a higher rate of selected cardiac, constitutional, hematologic, metabolic and renal toxicities in younger patients ($p < 0.05$). Overall, objective responses and survival were not affected by age, though older patients had a higher partial response rate ($p = 0.04$).

CONCLUSIONS: IL-2 is safe and has comparable therapeutic effectiveness in patients ≥ 65 years. Age should not be considered a contraindication to treatment with IL-2 in otherwise eligible patients.

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