

Spinal extramedullary ependymoma

Pomeraniec et al present a rare extramedullary ependymoma with diffuse spinal metastatic disease, and review the previous reports of extramedullary spinal ependymomas.

A 23-year-old man with a history of progressive neck, shoulder and arm pain, with sensory and motor symptoms in the C7 dermatome. MRI of the cervical spine demonstrated a ventral contrast-enhancing lesion with evidence of enhancement along the dura and spinal cord of the upper cervical spine, thoracic spine, and cauda equina. He underwent a tumor debulking procedure without complications. Following surgery, he received craniospinal radiation to treat the remaining tumor and diffuse leptomeningeal disease. The final pathology of the tumor revealed that it was a World Health Organization Grade III anaplastic ependymoma. At the 1 year follow-up, the patient had stable imaging and had returned to his preoperative functional status. Of the 19 reported patients with primary intradural, extramedullary spinal ependymomas, two had extradural components and seven had anaplastic grades. Only one tumor with an anaplastic grade resulted in metastatic disease, but without spinal recurrence.

This is the first report of an intradural, extramedullary spinal ependymoma with an anaplastic grade, presenting with concomitant diffuse, nodular leptomeningeal metastasis involving the upper cervical spine, thoracic spine, conus medullaris, and cauda equina. Similar to the treatment of intramedullary ependymomas with metastasis, this patient underwent an aggressive debulking procedure followed by radiation therapy to the entire neuroaxis ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Pomeraniec IJ, Dallapiazza RF, Sumner HM, Lopes MB, Shaffrey CI, Smith JS. Anaplastic extramedullary cervical ependymoma with leptomeningeal metastasis. J Clin Neurosci. 2015 Dec;22(12):1871-6. Epub 2015 Oct 23. PubMed PMID: 26601808.

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Last update: **2016/08/05 12:35**

