

2. Summary

Quality of life in patients with head and neck tumors

The prevalence of head and neck tumours constantly increasing in the last decades represents the serious medical and social problem. The retrospective assessment of the quality deals with the quality of life in patients with early stages of oral cavity tumours after the high dose rate brachytherapy treatment (HDR BRT).

The quality of life has been evaluated in 14 patients treated at the Department of Oncology and Radiotherapy, University Hospital Hradec Kralove for early onset of oral cavity tumour using the high dose rate brachytherapy treatment. The standardized EORTC QLQ-C30 and EORTC QLQ-H&N35 questionnaires have been used in this study. The evaluation of the questionnaires was performed 12 months after the treatment.

General health status using the EORTC QLQ-C30 was scored with 70 points. The most severe reported symptoms were fatigue, insomnia, loss of appetite, dyspnoea and financial problems. The main problems being identified by EORTC QLQ-H&N35 were weight gain, cough, pain, sticky saliva and social eating. On the contrary weight loss, speech impairments, difficulties in mouth opening, swallowing and sensory problems were not considered as significant ones.

The quality of life in individuals treated with the high dose rate brachytherapy represents an effective treatment method of early oral cancer with acceptable quality of life. The initiation of the prospective multicentric study focused on the quality of life in patients with head and neck tumours should be desirable.

Key words: Oral cancer, brachytherapy, quality of life.