Successful Treatment of Advanced Squamous Cell Carcinoma Achieved Through Immunotherapy

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INTRODUCTION

• Cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma is the most common non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) in Caucasian populations.

• Standard treatments for cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma include surgical excision, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy.

• The use of immunotherapy has been implemented for the treatment of cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma and has shown great potential.

CASE PRESENTATION

• 67-year-old male presents with an advanced case of squamous cell carcinoma on the nasal dorsum (Figure 1).

• A biopsy of the lesion showed infiltrating carcinoma with focal clear cell features, consistent with infiltrating moderate to well-differentiated squamous cell carcinoma.

• PET/CT did not show metastasis of avid adenopathy.

• The patient refused following the standard treatment protocol.

• Patient was treated with Pembrolizumab 200mg IV solutions, with subsequent cycles every 21 days.

• The lesion showed an immediate response to treatment and was completely resolved by the 11th cycle (Figure 2A and 2B).

DISCUSSION

• Gold Standard therapy for cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma is surgical intervention such as Mohs microscopic excision.

• Surgical resection can also be supplemented with chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

• Surgical excision can be challenging in cosmetically-challenging areas such as the face.

• Monotherapy with Pembrolizumab has shown great potential as an alternative treatment modality.

• Immunotherapy work best on tumors with high mutation burden and advanced tumor stage.

• Possible challenges include limited efficacy for percutaneous lesions and early cancer stages in addition to resistance to therapy.

CONCLUSION

• Facial cutaneous cell carcinoma is a common diagnosis that can be made at various stages of development.

• Facial tumors pose a more cosmetically-challenging presentation in treatment, increasing the need for alternatives.

• Immunotherapeutic agents have shown a great potential in treating advanced cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma.

• Additional Studies and clinical trials are needed for a better understanding of this treatment modality.