

LETTER TO EDITOR

Denosumab as a long-term palliative therapy in parathyroid carcinoma

C.V. Tong¹, L.T. Loh² and Z. Hussein³

From the ¹Medical Department, Hospital Melaka, Melaka, Malaysia, ²Medical Department, Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Johor Bahru, Malaysia and ³Endocrinology Unit, Department of Medicine, Hospital Putrajaya, Putrajaya, Malaysia

Address correspondence to C. V. Tong, Department of Medicine, Hospital Melaka, Jalan Haji Mufti Khalil, 75400, Melaka, Malaysia. email: tchinvoon@yahoo.com

Dear editor,

We read with great interest the case shared by Dr Athanasios Fountas *et al.* and their experience in managing a patient with parathyroid carcinoma. This is indeed a rare condition, accounting for only 0.3–2.1% of primary hyperparathyroidism.^{1,2} In our own tertiary endocrine center, the percentage of parathyroid carcinoma among patients with primary hyperparathyroidism from year 2003–12 was only 1.4%. Surgery remains the mainstay of therapy and provides potential cure; even in recurrent disease. However, reoperation for recurrent or persistent parathyroid carcinoma is associated with substantial morbidity.³ All our patients with parathyroid carcinoma are monitored lifelong. In event of recurrence, surgery, if feasible, is still our first line of management. Therapies such as denosumab despite being effective in controlling hypercalcemia for long term period, remains in our opinion, a palliative one.^{4,5} A global registry for parathyroid carcinoma would be beneficial for those treating this rare disease in the future.

Conflict of interest: None declared.

References

1. Ruda JM, Hollenbeak CS, Stack BC. Jr. A systematic review of the diagnosis and treatment of primary hyperparathyroidism from 1995 to 2003. *Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg* 2005; **132**:359.
2. Ozolins A, Narbutis Z, Vanags A, Simtniece Z, Visnevskaja Z, Akca A, Wiroeski D, Gardovskis J, Strumfa I, Goretzki PE. Evaluation of malignant parathyroid tumours in two European cohorts of patients with sporadic primary hyperparathyroidism. *Langenbecks Arch Surg* 2016; **401**:943–51.
3. Kebebew E, Arici C, Duh QY, Clark OH. Localization and reoperation results for persistent and recurrent parathyroid carcinoma. *Arch Surg* 2001; **136**:878.
4. Baretic M. Is denosumab a long-term option for the treatment of parathyroid carcinoma?. *QJM* 2016; **109**:288.
5. Tong CV, Hussein Z, Noor NM, Mohamad M, Ng WF. Use of denosumab in parathyroid carcinoma with refractory hypercalcemia. *QJM* 2015; **108**:49–50.

Received: 6 October 2016; Revised (in revised form): 9 October 2016

© The Author 2016. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Association of Physicians. All rights reserved.

For Permissions, please email: journals.permissions@oup.com