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Role of photodynamic therapy and intraductal radiofrequency ablation in cholangiocarcinoma



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ABSTRACT

Cholangiocarcinoma comprises 3% of all gastrointestinal malignancies. Prognosis is poor as the disease is locally advanced at the time of its presentation. Biliary endoprosthesis are widely used for biliary decompression, however, they only provides temporary relief. Photodynamic therapy and Radiofrequency ablation are two innovative approaches performed endoscopically to locally destruct the malignant tissue. This chapter focuses on their application and appropriate use along with their benefits and complications.

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Introduction

Cholangiocarcinoma is a malignancy that can occur anywhere in the biliary system. It is classified into three main categories: intrahepatic, distal, and perihilar region also called Klatskins tumor [1]. Klatskins tumor accounts for 60 to 80% of all cholangiocarcinoma [2]. Local tumor resection is effective in Bismuth classification Type I and II [3]. However, patients presenting with Type III and IV, surgical resection does not seem to be beneficial in term of survival. Untreated cholangiocarcinoma poses frequent episodes of cholangitis from biliary obstruction secondary to tumor overgrowth. Endoprosthesis has become the mainstay short term palliative treatment for malignant biliary strictures. Self expanding metal stents have shown improved patency over plastic stents; however, over 50% of patients will have stent occlusion in the first 6 to 8 months [4]. Two types of metal stents, covered and

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Fig. 1. Fluoroscopy demonstrating Bismuth III lesion on contrast injection (Patient A).

uncovered, are commonly used. Uncovered metal stents are typically placed at the hilum to avoid occluding dependant radicals. They, however, pose the risk of tumor ingrowth, leading to recurrent biliary obstruction. Photodynamic therapy (PDT) and Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA) are becoming increasingly used methods to induced intraductal necrosis and long term patency.



Fig. 2. Fluoroscopy showing PDT application in the right hepatic duct (Patient A).

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