Oncologic emergencies secondary to advanced colorectal cancer successfully treated with oxaliplatin/5-fluorouracil/leucovorin: report of three cases.


Metastatic/advanced colorectal cancer is considered a resistant disease and oncologic emergencies secondary to advanced disease may be regarded with a nihilistic attitude. The objective of this report is to emphasize the efficacy of the oxaliplatin/5-fluorouracil/leucovorin regimen (FOLFOX-4) in three patients presenting oncologic emergencies secondary to advanced colon cancer. The first case was a 40-year-old man with severe respiratory insufficiency due to massive carcinomatous lymphangitis; subsequently a cecal adenocarcinoma was diagnosed. The patient's conditions became life-threatening and he was admitted to the intensive care unit. The second case was a 41-year-old woman presenting with fever, abdominal mass and pain. Ultrasound and CT-scan revealed two hepatic masses (13 x 15 and 15 x 20 cm), diagnosed as liver metastases from colon cancer. The patient's condition deteriorated with intestinal obstruction secondary to the large left liver mass. The third case was a 58-year-old woman presenting with hepatic mass, fever and weight loss. Ultrasound and CT-scan showed a liver lesion occupying the right lobe (12 x 14 cm). Ultrasonically-guided biopsy and colonoscopy showed liver metastases from cecal cancer. A 5-fluorouracil/leucovorin regimen failed to improve her clinical condition and she had disease progression, inferior vena cava neoplastic thrombosis and right hydronephrosis. All three cases demonstrate that even patients with advanced colorectal cancer presenting with oncologic emergencies and life-threatening conditions can be successfully treated with the FOLFOX-4 regimen.