

Peer Review File

Article information: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21037/fomm-20-61>

Reviewer A

This manuscript is a case report on distant metastases of carcinoma of the upper jaw. It describes the development of paravertebral and vertebral soft tissue metastases. It is moderately well written, although somewhat short. The histopathology of the primary tumor and distant lesions seems similar. I think that it is important to confirm this using molecular biological techniques.

Retropharyngeal lymph node metastases of maxillary cancers are not rare. It can be theorized that these can subsequently lead to paravertebral metastases.

Line 52. ‘; With regard to distant metastasis from oral cancer, the hypopharynx is the most common site ...’; Hypopharynx is not a subsite or oral cavity.

Reply: Authors agree with the review statement and modified this affirmation in the text

Line 145. D5 must be L5?

Reply: The affected vertebra was D12. The metastasis involved the paravertebral space from D12 to L3. We changed this affirmation in the text. We thank the reviewer for letting us note this mistake.

Reviewer B

This case report of maxillary gingival squamous cell carcinoma with distant metastasis to the soft tissue around the thoracic vertebrae is rare and I consider it a valuable case. However, there is no description of the duration of treatment, chemotherapy regimen, duration after the removal of soft tissue metastasis, or patient symptoms, so I cannot compare this case with previous literature. It is also recommended that this paper be submitted at least 3-5 years after resection of soft tissue metastases in order to determine the prognosis of this patient who is currently undergoing chemotherapy. The author’s definition of soft tissue changes from sentence to sentence, and sometimes soft tissue includes the lung and sometimes does not, making the article difficult to understand. In addition, references are not given properly, which reduces the credibility of the introduction and discussion.

Reply: Authors agree with the reviewer and proceeded to add additional information about patient's symptoms, duration of treatment, chemotherapy regimen, duration after the removal of soft tissue metastasis. In addition, references were reviewed and modified according to reviewer suggestions

“In this sense, only seven cases of distant metastases have been described.” According from authors' abstract, there are seven cases of distant metastasis, but which references are you citing? In the introduction, the author states that there were 7 cases of distant metastasis limited to soft tissue. However, since authors describe distant metastases in abstract, it is usually necessary to include bone, liver, and lung metastases. Please provide the exact number of distant metastasis cases from the literature citation.

Clinical course and survival in patients with squamous cell carcinoma of the maxillary alveolus and hard palate: Results from a single-center prospective cohort Hakim SG, et al.

Which Factors Affect the Long-Term Survival of Patients with Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma With Distant Metastasis? Sekikawa S, et al.

I checked the above paper, and there were at least 50 cases of distant metastasis of maxillary gingival squamous cell carcinoma. Please review the references again.

Reply: Authors agree with the reviewer and modified the above statement as suggested by reviewer

Provide a reference for each of the sentences in Lines 52-55 and Line57-59.

Reply: A reference for each of the sentences in line 52-55 and line 57-59 was added as suggested by the reviewer

If possible, Lines 57-59 should be accompanied by a reference for each organ.

Reply: A reference for each organ was added by the authors as suggested by the reviewer

Line60 Distant metastasis usually occurs in advanced cancer. I consider that Interestingly is not necessary.

Reply: The word interestingly was deleted from the text as suggested by the reviewer

Line64. Please clarify the site and size of the chronic ulcer.

Reply: The site and side of the lesion was clarified

Line67 Pathological diagnosis should be provided according to the WHO classification and should include the degree of differentiation, not “invasive”. From the sentences in Line67 “Few suspicious cervical nodes were observed on preoperative CT scan and clinical exploration” and the legend of Fig 2 “Ct scan showing a suspicious node involving left 1b level”, I can’t understand whether authors suspected lymph node metastasis or not. Please be consistent in your descriptions.

Reply: Authors added the information related to WHO classification and clarified the findings related to neck involvement before surgery

Line74 Describe the regimen in detail for adjuvant chemoradiotherapy. Line78 “A fine needle aspirate” should be changed to “A fine needle aspirate biopsy”.

Reply: Authors changed “A fine needle aspirate” for “A fine needle aspirate biopsy”

Fig 4 Since the surgery was performed, please include pathological images of the surgical specimen rather than the biopsy specimen. Because it is not clear from the MR image findings whether the squamous cell carcinoma has clearly metastasized to the soft tissue or the transverse process of D5, please include intraoperative photographs to prove that the thoracic vertebrae metastasis has not spread to the soft tissues. If only MR images is available, please list the characteristic findings that suggest a soft tissue origin and provide references in the discussion.

Reply: Authors added the additional informations required by the reviewer

Even though the introduction states that there have been reports of cases of distant metastasis to soft tissues such as myocardium and skin, in line 86, authors state that there have been no previous reports. This is a discrepancy. Please recheck the references.

Reply: Authors checked the references and modified this statement

In line 94, the author discusses pain in cases of soft tissue metastasis, but in this case, there is no mention of pain, so it is difficult to discuss.

Reply: Authors added information about patient's symptoms in the case report section

In line102, the author discusses the prognosis, but there is no description of the postoperative follow-up period for this case, so it cannot be discussed with the references.

Reply: Authors added information about patient's prognosis in the case report section