

Brachytherapy (Ru 106) in the treatment of malignant melanoma of the choroid

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Introduction: The authors report on the first 50 patients with primary choroidal melanoma who received primary treatment with Ru 106 plaques in 56 applications.

Materials and methods: We examined the records of 23 men and 27 women, treated between July 1986 and July 1992. The patients were 22-78 years old (mean 52.1 years). Height of the tumor was in the range from 2 to 7.1 mm (mean 4.5 mm) Follow-up time was from 15 to 144 months (mean 44.9 months). The dose to the apex of the tumor ranged from 82 to 120 Gy.

Results: Complete regression of the tumor occurred in 25 patients, partial regression occurred in 25 patients; second application of the plaque was necessary in 6 patients. Of the retreated patients, one later required enucleation because of tumor regrowth. In remaining 5 patients, regression was complete in 2 patients, and partial in 3. Enucleation was performed in 7 patients, in one because of late progression (after 110 months), glaucoma and panophthalmitis in two others, and regrowth of the tumor in the remaining 4 patients. Distant metastases were the cause of death in one patient 39 months after therapy. At that time, there were no signs of local progression. No systemic dissemination was detected at the follow-up in all other patients. 29 patients retained visual acuity greater than 0.1. Late radiogenic complications occurred in 8 patients.

Key words: choroid neoplasms, brachytherapy, melanoma
