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Asia-Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology

Protecting female fertility in cancer patients (Review)

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Abstract

Aim: The preservation of fertility in female patients diagnosed with cancer has recently been an area of intensive investigation. This review summarizes available options and discusses recently published data concerning experimental methods. Specific strategies for fertility preservation in women with gynecologic malignancies are also presented. Method: The MEDLINE database was reviewed for all publication on medication, surgery or assisted reproductive technology that could potentially preserve fertility in women who are receiving cancer therapy. Conclusion: There are many modalities that are available to a patient undergoing a treatment that will negatively impact on her fertility. While many procedures and medical interventions have been proven successful both in terms of ovarian function and pregnancy rates, other techniques have great potential but do not have long-term clinical data. gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) analogs prevent chemotherapy-induced ovarian damage in animals, however, human results are controversial. Anti-apoptotic agents may present an innovative treatment to prevent oocyte destruction during cancer therapy. The cryopreservation of embryo, oocyte and ovarian tissue is one option to preserve fertility. It is important that the patients' primary-care physician understand the methods available to preserve fertility in a cancer patient and communicate this information to the patient. The improvement of these techniques as well as a better characterization of their success rates and risks await further investigation. © 2006 Blackwell Publishing Asia Pty Ltd.

Author keywords

Chemotherapy; Cryo preservation; Gonadotropin-releasing hormone agonists; Premature ovarian failure

Indexed Keywords

EMTREE drug terms: antineoplastic agent; apoptosis inhibitor; gonadorelin agonist; medroxyprogesterone acetate; megestrol acetate; oral contraceptive agent; progesterone; sphingosine 1 phosphate

EMTREE medical terms: amenorrhea; cancer chemotherapy; cancer patient; cancer radiotherapy; cryopreservation; echography; endometrium biopsy; endometrium cancer; female; female infertility; fertilization in vitro; germ cell tumor; gonad dysfunction; gynecologic cancer; human; MEDLINE; nonhuman; nuclear magnetic resonance imaging; oligomenorrhea; oocyte maturation; ovary cancer; ovary disease; ovary follicle atresia; ovary function; ovary insufficiency; pregnancy rate; premature ovarian failure; priority journal; radiation dose; radiation exposure; review; risk assessment; salpingooophorectomy; surgical approach; surgical technique; systematic review; uterine cervix cancer

Chemicals and CAS Registry Numbers: medroxyprogesterone acetate, 71-58-9; megestrol acetate, 595-33-5; progesterone, 57-83-0; sphingosine 1 phosphate, 26993-30-6

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