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**Clinical and epidemiological aspects of conjunctival malignant melanoma in patients followed at the Ocular Tumor Section - UNIFESP/EPM from 1995 to 2002**

Walter Kenji Fukumoto Priscilla Ballalai Bordon Clélia M. Erwenne Purpose: To evaluate the clinical and epidemiological aspects of conjunctival malignant melanoma (CMM) and to compare with data from the literature.. Methods: Data from medical records of patients attended from October 1995 to July 2002 at the Ocular Tumor Section - UNIFESP/EPM with the diagnosis of CMM, were reviewed. The factors evaluated included age, race, sex, anatomical site of the tumor (bulbar conjunctiva, palpebral conjunctiva, forniceal conjunctiva, caruncle, cornea, eyelid margin, or combination of these), treatment, adjunctive therapy, local recurrences, distant metastasis and survival rate. Results: Thirteen patients were included in this study, 8 females and 5 males. The mean age was 54,2 yrs. Eight patients were white and 5 were black. The most frequent tumor location was the bulbar conjunctiva ( 8 patients). Other locations were caruncle ( 2 patients), cornea (2 patients) and bulbar and palpebral conjunctiva ( 1 patient). All patients were submitted to surgical excision of the tumor and the pathology confirmed the diagnosis. In five patients the tumor arose from PAM with atypia, in one patient from a pre-existing naevus, and in seven patients “de novo”. Seven patients received topical Mitomycin C 0,02% qid for 3 to 4 weeks as an adjuvant therapy or to treat residual disease. There was one local recurrence and distant metastasis (to lymph nodes) occurred in two patients during a mean follow up of 24 months. Conclusion: In this group of patients the CMM had a preference for white and middle-aged people and there was a preference for women over men, which agrees with the literature. Although most CMM arise from PAM with atypia and rarely arise “de novo”, in this study most of them occurred “de novo”. The local recurrence of the tumor was less (7,7%) than that described in the literature ( 56%). Distant metastasis were not related to unfavourable tumour locations.