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125I brachytherapy for uveal melanoma

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Purpose: to evaluate the results of 125I brachytherapy for uveal melanoma.

Material and Methods: a retrospective study was performed on all patients with uveal melanoma treated with 125I brachytherapy between January/2002 and December/2004. **Results:** 63 consecutive patients were studied with a mean age of 55 years; 57 (94%) caucasians; 60 (95%) uveal melanomas were pigmented; 54 (86%) located at the choroid, 7 (11%) at the ciliary body and 2 (3%) at the iris; the mean tumor thickness and basal diameter before treatment were 4.5mm and 9.5mm; the mean treatment time was 5,7 days; the mean apical and basal doses applied were 8.990 cGy and 33.000cGy. Complications occurred in 23 (37%) cases at the mean time of 7.2 months after treatment, including retinal detachment, vitreous hemorrhage, radiation retinopathy and papillopathy, glaucoma, and scleral necrosis. After a mean of 13,3 months of follow-up the mean tumor thickness was reduced to 4,0mm and the mean tumor basal diameter to 8.58mm. 57 (91%) eyes were conserved. The final visual acuity decreased in 25 (40%) cases. Melanomas with larger initial diameters presented significant higher complication, larger decrease in visual acuity and lower conservation rates. Patients with treatment complications had significant larger reduction in visual acuity and lower conservation rate. Three patients (3%) died of tumor related causes.

Conclusion: 125I brachytherapy is an effective treatment for uveal melanoma with elevated index of tumor control and eye conservation.