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RESULTS OF CONTACT β - IRRADIATION OF CHOROIDDAL MELANOMAS

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Purpose: Between the end of 1986 and the end of October 1996 81 patients suffering from choroidal melanoma were treated with Ruthenium -106 β ray plaques at the Department of Ophthalmology University Medecical School of Debrecen,Hungary.

Methods: The irradiations were performed with Ruthenium-106 β ray scleral plaques. The necessary irradiation dose was calculated to reach 100Gy at the apex of the tumor in every case. Under local or general anesthesia the conjunctiva was incised and the plaque was sutured onto the sclera, covering the base of the tumor. The precise localisation of the tumors was established during the operation by ultrasonography and transillumination as well. Tumor regression was recorded by fluorescein angiography, ultrasonography and fundus photography.

Results: In 75 cases (92.5%) the treatment was successful. The mean follow up period was 3.5 years after the irradiation. In five cases the affected eye had to be enucleated. Three patient died in generalized metastases and one patient had liver metastases within the follow up period. Repeated plaque therapy was necessary in nine cases. Additional photocoagulation was performed after irradiation in 26 cases. Of the successfully treated 75 patients 65 developed flat scars. The retained visual acuity varied between 1.0 - and light perception -determined mostly by the localisation of the tumor.

Conclusion: The irradiation by Ruthenium -106 scleral plaques of choroidal melanomas proved to be an effective treatment both in cases of small and medium sized choroidal melanomas in our experience in accordance with data in the literature.