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Meningioma recurrence

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Meningioma recurrence

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Abstract

Meningioma accounts for more than 30% of all intracranial tumours. It affects mainly the elderly above the age of 60 with a female:male ratio of 3:2. The prognosis is variable, usually favourable with no progression in tumour grade and no recurrence in WHO grade 1 tumours. However, a minority of tumours represent atypical (grade 2) or anaplastic (grade 3) meningiomas and this heterogeneity is also reflected in histopathological appearances. Irrespective of the grade, the size of the tumour and the localisation may have severe, sometimes lethal consequences. Following neurosurgical interventions to remove the tumour, recurrence and progression in WHO grade may occur. Our knowledge on predisposing histomorphological and molecular factors of recurrence is rather limited. These can be classified as I) demographic II) environmental, III) genetic and epigenetic IV) imaging, V) neuropathological, VI) neurosurgical. In view of the complex background of tumour recurrence, the recognition of often subtle signs of increased risk of recurrence requires close collaboration of experts from several medical specialties. This multidisciplinary approach results in better therapy and less complications related to tumour recurrence.

Introduction

Meningioma is one of the most frequent intracranial tumour. The prevalence peaks between the age of 60 and 70 years with a female:male ratio of 3:2. Nevertheless, the tumour may also occur in children. The most frequent localisations are parasagittal, lateral convexity, the wings of sphenoid bone, anterior fossa close to the olfactory nerve, the sellar region, posterior fossa in the vicinity of foramen magnum, respectively¹. Most meningiomas are histologically benign. The WHO classification distinguishes three histological grades (1-2-3) and 15 subtypes². Although meningiomas are usually histologically benign, space occupying lesions within the close skull can never be considered absolutely risk free, as due to the increase of the intracranial pressure they potentially may lead to life-threatening complications. Because recurrence and progression are well-known and not infrequent characteristics of meningiomas, a thorough analysis and better understanding of contributory factors are of crucial importance. In the current review of literature we assessed the predictive factors of tumour recurrence with focus on clinical consequences, histological alterations and risk factors related to the tumour treatment itself. Independent risk factors, such as sex and age, have also been analysed. Special emphasis has been devoted to predictive signs detectable by imaging techniques. The predictive values of immunohistochemical and other molecular markers in relation histological grade is increasingly recognised and therefore reviewed. Finally, the extent of surgical resection reflected by the Simpson grade appears very closely associated with the risk of recurrence. In summary, in this review we assess predictive factors derived from several neuro-specialties, because their combined assessment can help to reach the best clinical decision on patient care (Figure 1).

Predisposing factors of meningioma recurrence

I. Demographic

The role of age and sex has been studied in relation to risk of recurrence. However, there has been no significant correlation between this two factors³⁻⁶

II. Environmental

An important environmental and/or iatrogenic factor is ionising radiation of the head and neck region. The increased incidence of meningiomas among survivors of the Hiroshima nuclear disaster of the Second World War also supports this notion. However, most cases of radiation-induced meningiomas are iatrogenic and related to the diagnostic irradiation in dental practice. Therapeutic irradiation (radiotherapy) appears highly relevant and there is growing body of evidence to support this^{7,8}. Interestingly, traumatic head injury also increases the risk of meningioma 1 or 2 decades after the trauma in a dose dependent manner (and apparently unrelated to the severity of injury)⁹. The female predominance of meningioma rises the possibility of hormonal effects in the pathogenesis although large scale epidemiological studies have not provided unequivocal evidence to prove hormonal factors in pathogenesis and pathomechanism¹⁰. Nevertheless, it is well-known that during pregnancy meningioma may undergo rapid growth, which could have lethal outcome¹¹. In breast cancer sufferers there is also modest increase in incidence¹². Long term exogenous hormone replacement therapy has also been implicated tumorigenesis¹³. Hu et al. in a comprehensive analysis examined the role of various environmental factors, in the Chinese population¹⁴. The results reveal that smoking significantly increases the incidence of meningioma in women. Similarly lead, tin, cadmium as an occupational hazard also increases meningioma incidence in affected workers. In contrast, food rich in fruits and vegetables decreases the chance of having a meningioma¹⁴. Although alcohol consumption has been implicated as a risk factor for meningioma, there are no convincing evidence to support this hypothesis¹⁵. With the advent of novel telecommunication techniques, in particular mobile phones, the question has emerged whether there is an association between meningioma development and use of cell phones. Interphone company conducted a study which concluded there was no such association¹⁶. Nevertheless we have to take into account that there are not many research reports on this field and the follow-up period is relatively short because mobile phones have become widely used in the past 20 years or so.

III. Genetic and epigenetic

Meningioma is also component of numerous familiar tumour syndromes. It is most frequent in neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2) and can also occur in other congenital and familial diseases: multiple endocrine neoplasia type 1 (MEN1), Gorlin-, Cowden-, Gardner-, Turcot-, von Hippel–Lindau-(VHL) and Li–Fraumeni syndrome¹⁷. The *NF2* gene is located on the long

arm of chromosome 22, coding tumour suppressor protein merlin. In sporadic cases (i.e. in meningiomas unrelated to tumour syndromes) there is mutation in 60% of cases. The frequency and type of mutation in various meningioma grades is roughly identical¹⁸. A novel avenue to understand meningioma pathogenesis is the research into epigenetic mechanisms. One of the first discovered epigenetic change in tumours is aberrant DNA methylation. Although *NF2* is relatively frequently mutated in meningioma, epigenetic alteration of *NF2* is rare. In contrast, *TIMP3*, *TP73* és *RASSF1A* promoters and *HOXA7*, *HOXA9*, *HOXA10* homebox genes are often hypermethylated in meningiomas. Another epigenetic change, histone modification, has no proven involvement in the pathogenesis. The third major epigenetic factor, the micro RNAs (miRNAs), are important in regulating post-translational silencing. miR-190a is increased, whereas miR-29c-3p and miR-219-5p are decreased in a subset of meningiomas and these tumours have higher risk of recurrence¹⁹.

IV. Imaging

In tumour diagnostics and follow-up imaging is crucial. The characteristic dural tail detectable on CT and MR images, the peritumoral edema, calcification are all important features¹. Significant correlation has been found between tumour size (>50mm), shape (mushroom), localisation (base of skull), presence of brain invasion, and the severity of peritumoral oedema^{3,20–23}. The latter is important in recurrence because oedema increases the chance of brain invasion by the tumour which is a key factor in recurrence²⁴. The large size, basal localisation and malignant histological features have association with increased severity of peritumoral edema²⁵.

V. Neuropathological

Histological grade

The clinical behaviour and risk of recurrence has very close association with the histological grade of the tumour. The histological grade and the extent of resection appears to be the two most important predictive factors of recurrence. According to the WHO classification, meningiomas are grouped in three grades (grade I, II, III). According to the typical morphological appearances and the mitotic index (assessed by the number of mitosis per 10 high power microscopic fields (HPF) there are 15 histological subtypes². WHO grade I has 9,

whereas both WHO II and WHO grade III has 3 subtypes (Table 1). Clear cell meningioma is grade II if intracranial and grade I. when occurs in the vertebral canal.

In WHO grade II „atypical” meningioma minimum three of the following histomorphological features are detectable: increased cellularity, small cells with increased nucleus/cytoplasm ratio, prominent nucleoli, ‘patternless’ or sheet-like growth, focal small, geographic necrosis, 4 or more mitosis/10 HPF. In anaplastic (WHO grade III.) meningioma there are obvious malignant cytological features, such as undifferentiated growth, which makes them similar to carcinoma, melanoma or sarcoma (regarding cytological atypia). In anaplastic meningioma there are 20 or more mitosis/10 HPF.

Several studies have proven the close association between histological grade and risk of recurrence. In higher grade tumours (i.e.: grade II, III) the increased cellularity, higher mitotic rate and presence of necrotic lesions predict the increased chance of recurrence^{3,21}. Significant relation has been established both in grade II (atypical) grade III (anaplastic) meningiomas. However, in anaplastic meningiomas these features are associated with less favourable outcome²⁶. Consistent with this recurrence-free survival and median time to recurrence were also significantly longer in atypical as compared to anaplastic meningiomas. Nevertheless, recurrence is not only a features of higher grade (II and III) meningiomas, because it occurs on benign (grade I) meningiomas, although less frequently. A study focusing on grade I tumours demonstrated that the chance of recurrence is higher in benign meningiomas which have small atypical areas within the neoplasm²⁷. Overall the far most important prognostic factor regarding tumour recurrence is the histological grade. In WHO grade I tumours the chance of recurrence is 7-25%, in grade II 29-59%, whereas in grade III. 50-94%².

Immunohistochemical markers

In immunohistochemical studies the two most frequently examined proteins are Ki-67 and p53. The role in tumour recurrence has been extensively studied.

p53 is a transcription factor, with an important role in regulation of cell cycle, preservation of genomic integrity, induction of apoptosis and inhibition of angiogenesis²⁸. p53 is activated by a wide range of cell damaging insults, such as oxidative stress, hypoglycaemia, hypoxia, DNA damage, oncogene expression, ribosomal dysfunction, telomere damage²⁹. p53 one of

the most important tumour suppressor protein and more than 50% of tumours harbour p53 mutation^{15,16}. Despite the large number of studies, the role of p53 in meningioma development and recurrence is not clear. Some authors describe significant correlation between p53 immunoreactivity and recurrence^{30,31}, whereas other studies could not confirm this⁶.

Ki-67 protein is expressed in mitotic cells. In the routine pathological diagnostics the protein is detected by the Mib-1 antibody clone. Ki-67 is detectable in all phases of active cell cycle, however it is missing in G₀. Furthermore, it plays role in ribosomal-RNA synthesis³². The amount of the protein has close correlation with the proliferative activity of the cell; in the interphase it is localized in the nucleoli, whereas in the mitotic phase it is on the surface of chromosomes. Therefore, it is an excellent marker to detect the proliferative pool of a given cell population³³. Numerous studies have demonstrated significant correlation between increased Ki-67 (Mib-1) labelling index and recurrence^{31,34,35}.

The Ki-67 labelling index is increasing with WHO grade in meningiomas. Interestingly, in recurring WHO grade I tumours a higher Ki-67 labelling index is present³¹. Also, there is significant correlation between extent of peritumoral oedema and expression of the marker³⁶.

The immunohistochemistry and other molecular studies rendered electron microscopic analysis less relevant and important in meningiomas; however, in rare and unusual cases it may be contributory to the diagnosis³⁷.

Molecular and genetic studies establish novel fields of research of meningioma pathogenesis. Immunohistochemistry is considered as a standard and well established tool to test and analyse novel proteins implicated in tumorigenesis. Therefore, it is still important research tool. The tissue microarray (TMA) technique enables cheap and rapid assessment of candidate proteins in large numbers of tumour samples³⁸. Recent article raise the possibility that poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase-1 (PARP1), which is an enzyme involved DNA repair, may have prognostic implications in meningiomas³⁹.

VI. Neurosurgical

In meningiomas with clinical symptoms the surgical resection is the primary choice of treatment in the majority of the cases. The aim of the surgical procedure is the complete resection of tumour (if possible), in order to achieve best quality of life and reduce the risk of recurrence. The extent of resection is graded according to Simpson in a 5-tier scale²⁴. There is close correlation between Simpson grade and risk of recurrence³. In higher Simpson grade (III-V) the disease free survival is shorter, quality of life is reduced with an increased chance of early recurrence of the tumour^{5,22,39,40} (Table 2). Rarely, 'seeding metastasis' may occur along the surgical tract in deep seated meningiomas⁴¹.

In cranial base meningiomas the surgical removal often bears higher risk of post-operative complications. In such situations stereotactic radiosurgery can be successful for tumor control. The main indications for both treatment methods (i.e. surgery and radiosurgery) are the radiological or neurological progression. However, in a great proportion of cranial base meningiomas – especially in the elderly – follow-up proves no progression - in this case in symptomless patients a neurosurgical procedure or radiosurgery is not evidently necessary. On the other hand, increasing tumor size can increase the risk at the repeat surgical removal or irradiation. Thus, one main challenge for clinicians is to determine factors that correlates with tumor progression in grade I meningiomas. For this reason, some studies have been already made. One of them is the investigation of the ornithine decarboxylase (ODC) activity and mRNA expression in meningiomas⁴². This report describes a significant correlation between ODC mRNA level in meningiomas with later recurrence and meningiomas without recurrence (despite the same Ki-67 proliferative index in both populations). These findings suggests a role of ODC gene expression in meningiomas recurrence.

Conclusion

Although meningiomas are frequent tumours, the mechanism underlying pathogenesis, recurrence and progression is still poorly understood. With the recent advances in diagnostics, treatments and research methods, there is a good hope for reduced recurrence and more efficient treatment of it. This requires a multidisciplinary approach and will have major impact on more effective, personalised therapies and overall better clinical outcome for meningioma patients.

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Conflict of interest statement

Authors state no conflict of interest.

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Legends

Figure 1. Possible factors in meningioma recurrence

Table 1. WHO classification of meningiomas (Modified from Perry *et al.*²⁾

Table 2. Simpson grading system for removal of meningiomas (Modified from www.radiopaedia.org⁴⁰⁾

Figure 1

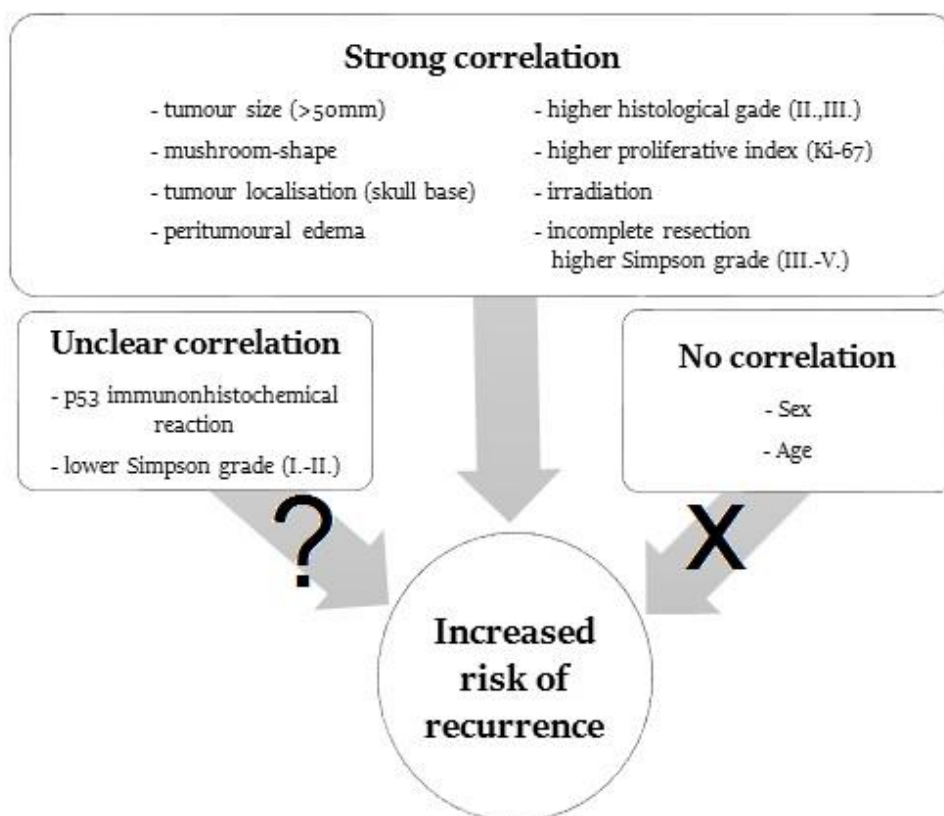


Table 1

WHO grade I.-	<i>meningotheial microcystic</i>	<i>fibroblastic secretory</i>	<i>transitional lymphoplasmacyte- rich</i>	<i>psammomatous metaplastic</i>	<i>angiomatous clear cell (spinal)</i>
WHO grade II.	<i>chordoid</i>	<i>clear cell (intracranial)</i>	<i>atypical</i>		
WHO grade III.	<i>papillary</i>	<i>rhabdoid</i>	<i>anaplastic</i>		

Table 2

	EXTENT OF MACROSCOPIC RESECTION	REMOVAL OF DURAL TAIL	RISK OF RECURRENCE (10 YEAR INTERVAL)
GRADE I	<i>Macroscopically complete</i> (tumour, involved bones and venous sinuses)	<i>Macroscopically complete</i>	9%
GRADE II	<i>Macroscopically complete</i> (tumour)	<i>Coagulation</i>	19%
GRADE III	<i>Macroscopically complete</i> (tumour)	<i>No resection</i>	29%
GRADE IV	<i>Partial removal</i>	<i>No resection</i>	44%
GRADE V	<i>Simple decompression with or without biopsy</i>	<i>No resection</i>	100%

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