

Erlotinib in advanced well-differentiated thymic carcinoma with overexpression of EGFR: a case report

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ABSTRACT

Aims and background. Advanced chemorefractory epithelial thymic tumors are still a challenge in clinical oncology. A therapeutic approach targeting a key molecular pathway could be the ideal solution in a neoplasm that can overexpress epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) in the epithelial component.

Methods. A patient with metastatic heavily pretreated thymic carcinoma was evaluated for EGFR expression in the primary tumor.

Results. Strong EGFR expression was revealed by immunohistochemistry. The patient received erlotinib therapy but had obtained no response after four months of treatment.

Conclusion. This preliminary experience suggests that erlotinib may not be a useful therapeutic choice in advanced pretreated thymic carcinomas.

Key words: malignant thymoma, target therapy, EGFR, erlotinib.

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