

Refractory pleural small cell carcinoma in never smoker. A case report

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ABSTRACT

A 47-year-old woman who had never smoked was evaluated for chest wall pain, cough and dyspnea that proved to be due to neoplastic right pleural disease with effusion. Cytological examination of the pleural fluid and histological analysis of a biopsy specimen of the pleural mass obtained during thoracoscopy were consistent with a diagnosis of small cell carcinoma. The patient was treated with two lines of chemotherapy and with octreotide, but without any clinical or radiological benefit. Since there was immunohistochemical overexpression of epidermal growth factor receptor, the patient was treated with gefitinib. Despite an initial clinical improvement she died due to disease progression. This case of a refractory pleural small cell carcinoma, which is an extremely rare disease, is the first reported in a never smoker and the first to be fully characterized for EGFR status.

Key words: pleural small cell carcinoma, therapeutic strategies, epidermal growth factor receptor.

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