Spontaneous regression of two giant basal cell carcinomas in a single patient after incomplete excision

Ulrich M. Rieger¹,², Christina Schlecker², Gerhard Pierer¹,², and Martin Haug²

¹Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, A.ö. Landeskrankenhaus Innsbruck, Innsbruck Medical University, Austria; ²Department of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery, University Hospital of Basel, Basel, Switzerland

ABSTRACT

Background. Spontaneous regression of small basal cell carcinoma has been reported. For giant basal cell carcinoma, however, no spontaneous regression has been described to date.

Case report. We present a patient with two independent giant basal cell carcinomas over the left clavicle and the lower back, measuring 7 x 12 cm and 18 x 20 cm, respectively. Both tumors were excised incompletely (R2) and the patient refused follow-up resections. After 52 and 16 months, respectively, no signs of recurrence were observed.

Conclusion. Incompletely excised giant basal cell carcinomas can regress spontaneously. A watch-and-wait approach after incomplete resection may be pragmatic to avoid mutilating follow-up resections in patients refusing further surgery.

Key words: giant basal cell carcinoma, regression, terebrant ulcer.

Correspondence to: Ulrich M. Rieger, MD, Klinik für Plastische & Rekonstruktive Chirurgie, A.ö. Landeskrankenhaus Innsbruck, Medizinische Universität Innsbruck, Anichstraße 35, 6020 Innsbruck, Austria.
Tel +43-512-504-0;
e-mail ulrich.rieger@uki.at

Received April 15, 2008; accepted September 29, 2008.