

Irinotecan during pregnancy in metastatic colon cancer

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ABSTRACT

Background. Colon cancer during pregnancy is a relatively rare occurrence. To date there has been sparse clinical evidence about the safety of chemotherapy in this setting because the available data derive only from single-institution case reports.

Methods. Irinotecan and fluorouracil, as part of the FOLFIRI regimen, were administered to a 33-year-old pregnant woman at an estimated gestational age of 23+ weeks. She had been diagnosed with adenocarcinoma of the transverse colon with liver and lymph node metastases.

Results. Chemotherapy was administered from the 23+th to the 28+th week of gestational age. Chemotherapy was stopped because of disease progression. At 30 weeks' gestational age, the patient underwent an emergency cesarean section and colon resection. She gave birth to a healthy male infant with no particular problems in neurological, respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive and nutritional function. At follow-up, the 13-month-old child had achieved all appropriate growth and developmental milestones.

Conclusions. Our report demonstrates the safety of exposure to FOLFIRI for both mother and fetus. The absence of any abnormalities in the infant makes irinotecan and fluorouracil a valid therapeutic option for colon cancer during pregnancy.

Key words: irinotecan, colorectal cancer, pregnancy, chemotherapy.

Disclosures: None. The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

This paper is dedicated to Marco Venturini, who died before his time. He was an outstanding clinician, clinical researcher and teacher. He made seminal observations mainly in breast cancer and his dedication to oncological disease influenced the practice of all his collaborators.

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