Phase II trial of combination chemotherapy with gemcitabine, 5-fluorouracil and cisplatin for advanced cancers of the bile duct, gallbladder, and ampulla of Vater

Byeong Seok Sohn1, Young Jin Yuh1, Ki-hwan Kim2, Tae Joo Jeon1, Nam Sun Kim1, and Sung Rok Kim1

Departments of 1Internal Medicine and 2Surgery, Sanggye Paik Hospital, Inje University College of Medicine, Seoul, Korea

ABSTRACT

Aims and background. For advanced cancers of the bile duct, gallbladder and ampulla of Vater, there are only a few treatment options. We explored the efficacy of the combination of gemcitabine, 5-fluorouracil and cisplatin for advanced biliary cancers.

Methods. From September 2003 to April 2010, 28 patients with recurrent or metastatic biliary tract cancer were enrolled. A treatment regimen consisting of gemcitabine (800 mg/m2 at a fixed dose rate on days 1 and 8), 5-fluorouracil (1 g/m2/day continuous infusion for 4 days) and cisplatin (60 mg/m2 on day 2) was repeated every 3 weeks.

Results. One (3.6%) patient showed complete response, 8 (28.6%) partial response, 14 (50%) stable disease and 5 (17.9%) disease progression. Overall, the objective response rate was 32.1% (95% CI, 17.9-50.6%) and the disease control rate was 82.1% (95% CI, 64.4-92.1%). Median progression-free survival and overall survival were 7.6 months (95% CI, 5.5-9.7) and 11.2 months (95% CI, 6.8-15.5), respectively. G3/4 neutropenia was observed in 44 (24.3%) of 181 cycles and G3/4 thrombocytopenia in 48 (26.5%) of 181 cycles. There was no treatment-related mortality.

Conclusions. The combined regimen of gemcitabine, 5-fluorouracil and cisplatin has comparable activity for patients with advanced cancer of the bile duct, gallbladder and ampulla of Vater. Toxicity was tolerable but substantial.