

Electrochemotherapy: A new therapeutic option for cancerous skin lesions.

Electrochemotherapy (ECT) is a technique that combines the intratumoral or intravenous administration of cytotoxic drugs (bleomycin or cisplatin) and the application of electrical pulses to the area of the lesion, thereby generating pores in the tumour cell membrane and allowing the cytotoxic agent to enter the cells.

This combination therapy can be used for the treatment of primary and metastatic skin tumour lesions. It is curative in patients with primary and localised skin tumours and palliative in patients with metastatic disease whose skin lesions do not respond to conventional systemic chemotherapy.

In our centre this technique has been performed with intravenous infusion of bleomycin in seven patients (Kaposi's sarcoma n=3 and secondary metastases n=4).

Two patients are excluded from the analysis of results because the procedure has just been performed.

Two patients with a diagnosis of metastatic melanoma achieved complete response in skin lesions. Two of the three patients with Kaposi's sarcoma achieved a complete response as the lesions were small (< 3 cm), while the remaining patient, despite initial clinical improvement, had a rapid progression due to the large body surface area involved.

Although experience with ECT is still limited, it is a technique that is proving very useful in the treatment of cutaneous lesions of Kaposi's sarcoma as well as cutaneous metastases secondary to other tumours, especially effective in small lesions. Due to its high response rates and few adverse effects, it is a very promising procedure with great clinical applicability.