

HIGH-DOSE CHEMOTHERAPY REGIMENTS IN THERAPY OF NHL DLBCL- SINGLE CENTER EXPERIENCE

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KEY WORDS: DLBCL, High dose chemotherapy, R-ICE, R-Dexa BEAM

Context: Relapsed-Refractory Diffuse Large B Cell Lymphoma (RR DLBCL), which accounts for approximately one-third of patients with DLBCL, remains a major cause of morbidity and mortality. Despite advances in the management of aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, the treatment of relapsed and primary refractory disease continues to be a challenge to the treating hematologist. High-dose chemotherapy (HDT) followed by autologous stem cell transplantation (ASCT) is considered standard in the treatment of patients with relapsed or refractory DLBCL. However, the optimal salvage regimen before ASCT has not yet been established.

Design: This is a retrospective study that analyzed 20 patients with relapsed or refractory DLBCL after anthracycline-based first-line chemotherapy (R-CHOP regimen) who received either R- DexaBEAM (dexamethasone, carmustine, etoposide, cytarabine, and melphalan; n =9) or R-ICE (ifosfamide, carboplatin, and etoposide; n =11) regimen as first salvage chemotherapy. Treatment in a patient, which achieved remission was followed by HDT/ASCT. The patients were diagnosed and treated at the University Clinic of Hematology- Skopje.

Patients and results: The overall response rate (OR) was higher for patients treated with R-ICE (54,5%; 95 % confidence interval -8,03- 20 %) as compared to the R-Dexa BEAM group (44,4 %; 95 % confidence interval -8,8- 16,8 %;), with higher complete response CR; 36,3 %; vs. 33,3%. Changing regimen due to failure of first salvage therapy was done in 1 patient initially receiving R- ICE, still achieved an OR of 25% with R-Dexa BEAM as second salvage therapy. For all patients proceeding to HDT/ASCT (n=10), a 3-year overall survival was 70 %.

Conclusion: Major adverse event in both groups was myelosuppression with higher but tolerable treatment-related toxicity for patients in the DexaBEAM group. Considering the the small sample size, our data suggest that R-ICE salvage chemotherapy is superior to R-Dexa BEAM for patients with R/R NHL DLBCL for remission induction prior to autologous transplantation.