

First wave mortality data versus full pandemic period from the COVID-CANCER HUIL study

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BACKGROUND

Cancer patients are one of the most affected by the current pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2.

Social inequalities influence the incidence rate of this disease, as we have seen in the high incidence in our center.

In our study, we asked whether the last covid-19 treatment advances, the capacity for restructuring the health centers and their non-saturation, influences the cancer patients outcomes.

METHODS

Retrospective review of 189 cancer patients diagnosed in our center with COVID-19 from March 5, 2020 to February 28, 2021. Study data was collected and managed using REDCap.

We compared COVID-19 diagnoses in first-wave cancer patients versus the full pandemic period until data cut-off, as well as patient characteristics and mortality rates.

RESULTS

We detected a mortality rate of 55/189 patients during the entire pandemic period vs 40/85 patients in the first wave (p = 0.03).

Median age: 72 years (34-95) in all period vs 76 (34-94) in first wave
125/189 men in all the period vs 50/85 patients in first wave(p = 0.2).

Most frequent histologies: lung cancer (72/189 vs 22/85, p = 0.07), colorectal (31/189 vs 19/85, p = 0.23), breast (24/189 vs 10/85, p = 0.82).

Staging: 113/189 metastatic disease at diagnosis of infection vs 32/85 in first wave (p <0.001).

	<i>First wave</i>	<i>2 subsequent waves</i>	<i>All pandemic</i>	<i>P value</i>
Patients (N)	85	104	189	
Mortality rate	40/85	15/104	55/189	<0.001

Table 1. Mortality rate differences between pandemic periods.

During the 2 subsequent waves in our center, where 104 more patients have been detected, mortality has dropped significantly:

⇒ From the initial 47% to 14.4% in the rest of the period

⇒ 40/85 patients in first wave vs 15/104 in second and third waves (p <0.001), despite having more metastatic involvement in infected patients.

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	<i>First wave (N =85)</i>	<i>All Pandemic (N =189)</i>	<i>P value</i>
Median age (median, range)	76 (34-94)	72 (34-95)	<i>P = 0.3</i>
Sex			
Man	50	125	<i>P = 0.2</i>
Woman	35	64	
Tumor site (three more frequent)			
Lung cancer	22	72	<i>P = 0.014</i>
Colorectal cancer	19	31	<i>P = 0.23</i>
Breast cancer	10	24	<i>P = 0.82</i>
Staging			
Metastatic disease	32	113	<i>P < 0.001</i>

Table 2. Differences in demographic characteristics between the two periods

CONCLUSIONS

In our center, one of the worst hit by the coronavirus crisis in Spain, with a supersaturation of almost 250% in the middle of the first wave, we have verified how the knowledge of the behavior of this disease, improvements in its treatment and a multidisciplinary management in Oncology ward have led to a significant decrease in mortality, going from almost 50% in the first wave to less than 15%, despite having suffered the disease during the two subsequent waves a greater number of patients with metastatic disease.