

免疫治疗头颈部鳞状细胞癌的预后因素分析

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摘要: [目的] 评估免疫治疗头颈部鳞状细胞癌(head and neck squamous cell carcinoma, HNSCC)患者疗效及预后影响因素。[方法] 回顾性收集接受 PD-1 单抗治疗 HNSCC 患者的临床和生存资料。采用 Kaplan-Meier 法分析基线特征(患者临床病理特征、联合治疗方案)和预后之间的关系。基于患者的生存状况和生存时间, 使用 X-tile 软件找到预后营养指数(PNI)的最佳截断值使之成为二分类变量。采用 Cox 回归模型进行单因素和多因素分析, 单因素分析中显著的变量包含在多因素 Cox 回归模型中, 确定独立预后因素。 $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。[结果] 研究人群中位无进展生存期(PFS)为 9.0 个月(95% CI: 7.6~10.4)。患者的性别、吸烟、饮酒、肿瘤分化程度、HPV 感染、原发部位、临床分期均不是生存危险因素。年龄在 60 岁及以下的患者有较好的 PFS(10.7 个月 vs 6.6 个月, $P = 0.024$)。64 例患者接受免疫治疗作为一线治疗, 接受一线治疗的患者有较高的总缓解率(ORR, 57.8%)。73 例患者接受免疫联合化疗, 18 例患者接受免疫联合化疗加抗血管生成治疗, 加用抗血管生成组 ORR 为 72.2%, 免疫联合化疗组 ORR 为 42.4% ($\chi^2 = 5.120$, $P = 0.024$)。接受放疗的患者较未接受的患者 PFS 更好($P = 0.049$)。PNI > 49.4 与更长的 PFS 有关(11.3 个月 vs 7.3 个月, $\chi^2 = 5.153$, $P = 0.023$)。对于非鼻咽癌患者, 免疫治疗前行病损切除手术(淋巴结转移的患者进行选择性淋巴清扫术)患者有更长的 PFS($P < 0.05$)。对于鼻咽癌患者, 免疫治疗前 EBV-DNA 检出阳性的患者 PFS 较差(7.0 个月 vs 11.9 个月, $\chi^2 = 4.298$, $P = 0.038$)。治疗线亚组分析显示, 一线免疫治疗患者 PFS 优于二线和三线及以上免疫治疗患者(10.9 个月 vs 5.9 个月 vs 6.7 个月, $\chi^2 = 8.353$, $P = 0.015$)。多因素 Cox 分析显示, 免疫治疗线数是 PFS 的独立预后因素。[结论] 免疫联合化疗加抗血管生成治疗可以提高 HNSCC 患者疗效, 免疫治疗线数是影响患者 PFS 的独立预后因素。

关键词: 头颈部鳞状细胞癌; 免疫检查点抑制剂; 预后营养指数; 生存分析

中图分类号: R739.6 **文献标识码:** A **文章编号:** 1671-170X(2023)09-0777-06

doi: 10.11735/j.issn.1671-170X.2023.09.B009

Factors Related Clinical Outcome of Immunotherapy for Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

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Abstract: [Objective] To evaluate the factors influencing the clinical outcome of immunotherapy in patients with head and neck squamous carcinoma (HNSCC). [Methods] Clinical data of 94 HNSCC patients who received PD-1 monoclonal antibody treatment in Renmin Hospital of Wuhan University were retrospectively analyzed. The relationship between clinical and pathological factors and clinical outcomes was analyzed with Kaplan-Meier method. X-tile software was used to determine the optimal cut-off value of prognostic nutritional index(PNI). Univariate and multivariate Cox regression was used analyze the predictive factors of clinical outcomes. [Results] The median progression-free survival (PFS) was 9.0 months (95% CI: 7.6~10.4 months) in this series of patients. Gender, smoking and drinking status, tumor differentiation, HPV infection, primary site, and clinical stage were not significantly correlated with the survival of patients. Patients aged 60 or younger had a better survival than those aged over 60 (10.7 months vs 6.6 months, $P = 0.024$). Sixty four patients who received immunotherapy as first-line treatment had an overall response rate (ORR) of 57.8%, 73 patients who received immunotherapy combined with chemotherapy had an ORR of 42.4%, while 18 patients who received immunotherapy combined with chemotherapy and anti-angiogenic therapy had a ORR of 72.2% ($\chi^2 = 5.120$, $P = 0.024$). Patients who received radiotherapy had a better PFS than those who did not ($P = 0.049$). Patients with baseline PNI > 49.4 had longer PFS than those with PNI ≤ 49.4 (11.3 months vs 7.3 months, $\chi^2 = 5.153$, $P = 0.023$). Non-nasopharyngeal carcinoma patients who underwent lesion resection surgery (selective lymphadenectomy for those with lymph node metastasis) before receiving immunotherapy had a longer PFS ($P < 0.05$). Nasopharyngeal carcinoma patients with positive EBV-DNA before immunotherapy had a poorer prognosis than those with negative EBV-DNA (7.0 months vs 11.9 months, $\chi^2 = 4.298$, $P = 0.038$). Subgroup analysis showed that patients with first-line immunotherapy had a better PFS than those with second-line and third-line or higher patients (10.9 months vs 5.9 months vs 6.7 months, $\chi^2 = 8.353$, $P = 0.015$). Multivariate Cox analysis showed that the immunotherapy line was an independent prognostic factor for PFS. [Conclusion] Immunotherapy combined with chemotherapy and anti-angiogenic therapy can improve therapeutic efficacy, and the number of immunotherapy lines is an independent prognostic factor affecting progression-free survival in patients with HNSCC.

Subject words: head and neck squamous cell carcinoma; immune checkpoint inhibitor; prognostic nutritional index; survival analysis

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收稿日期: 2023-03-23; 修回日期: 2023-08-05

头颈部肿瘤是一组具有相似位置和治疗方案的癌症的总称,包括口腔癌、鼻咽癌、口咽癌、下咽癌、喉癌和鼻腔、鼻窦癌^[1]。头颈部肿瘤主要危险因素包括吸烟、酗酒和致癌病毒[包括人乳头瘤病毒(主要是口咽癌)和EB病毒(鼻咽癌)]。头颈部鳞状细胞癌(head and neck squamous cell carcinoma, HNSCC)是全球第六大常见癌症,每年89万例新发病例和45万例死亡病例^[2]。HNSCC组织呈免疫抑制状态,淋巴细胞、自然杀伤(natural killer, NK)细胞和特异性抗原比正常组织少。因此,这种“冷肿瘤”可以通过不同的机制逃避免疫监视^[3]。免疫检查点抑制剂以T细胞调节途径为靶点,提高抗肿瘤免疫效率,在临床上取得了巨大进展^[4]。尽管头颈部肿瘤的免疫疗法取得了很大进展,但仍缺乏确定的预测因子来筛查患者的免疫疗法益处。本文回顾性研究接受免疫治疗HNSCC患者的疗效及预后影响因素。

1 资料与方法

1.1 一般资料

研究纳入了2020年1月1日至2022年12月31日期间在武汉大学人民医院肿瘤中心接受免疫检查点抑制剂治疗的HNSCC患者,共94例。其中口腔癌11例,鼻咽癌48例,口咽癌7例,下咽癌和喉癌22例,鼻腔、鼻窦癌6例。纳入标准:①基于病理学和影像学确诊HNSCC;②接受免疫治疗≥2个周期;③美国东部肿瘤协作组-体能状态(Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group-performance status, ECOG-PS)≤3分;④至少1个可以通过影像学数据测量或评估的原发性或转移性病变;⑤临床和病理资料齐全。排除标准:①既往或并发其他原发性肿瘤;②完全失访的患者;③存在影响血液学指标的因素,如血液系统疾病、急性或慢性感染以及其他需要药物治疗的疾病。本文内容经医院伦理委员会批准同意。

患者均接受免疫治疗,其中替雷利珠单抗28例,卡瑞利珠单抗21例,特瑞普利单抗15例,帕博利珠单抗14例,信迪利单抗13例,赛帕利单抗3例。药物用法:替雷利珠单抗、卡瑞利珠单抗、帕博利珠单抗以及信迪利单抗,200 mg, q21d;特瑞普利单抗和赛帕利单抗,240 mg, q21d。

收集患者的临床资料,包括性别、年龄、吸烟、饮

酒、原发部位、肿瘤分化程度、手术情况和淋巴结转移等。从电子病历中获取基线时(在给予免疫治疗前7 d内)的淋巴细胞计数和血清白蛋白值,并计算预后营养指数(prognostic nutritional index, PNI), $PNI = \text{血清白蛋白值(g/L)} + 5 \times \text{外周血淋巴细胞总数}(\times 10^9)^{[5]}$ 。并收集患者的P16蛋白和表皮生长因子受体(epidermal growth factor receptor, EGFR)的表达情况;收集鼻咽癌患者EB病毒编码RNA(Epstein-Barr virus encoded RNA, EBER)表达和基线时EB病毒DNA定量结果。

1.2 随访

随访基于电子病历和电话随访,随访截止日期2023年3月1日。所有患者在整个研究过程中都受到严格随访,无失访病例。每2个治疗周期评估1次患者的疗效,直到死亡或研究结束。

疗效评估是根据实体瘤反应评估标准1.1版(response evaluation criteria in solid tumours version 1.1, RECIST v.1.1)进行的,其中包括完全缓解(complete response, CR),部分缓解(partial response, PR),疾病稳定(stable disease, SD)和疾病进展(progressive disease, PD)。主要终点是无进展生存期(progression-free survival, PFS),次要终点是总缓解率(overall response rate, ORR)。PFS被定义为免疫治疗开始到首次疾病进展、最后一次随访或任何原因死亡的时间。ORR被定义为达CR或PR患者占患者总数的比例。疾病控制率(disease control rate, DCR)被定义为CR+PR+SD患者所占的比例。

1.3 统计学处理

采用SPSS 26.0软件进行数据处理。计数资料以例数及百分数表示。采用Kaplan-Meier法分析基线特征(患者临床病理特征、联合治疗方案)和预后之间的关系。基于患者的生存状况和生存时间,采用X-tile软件找到PNI的最佳截断值使之成为二分类变量。采用Cox回归模型进行单因素和多因素分析,单因素分析中显著的变量($P \leq 0.01$)包含在Cox多因素比例回归模型中,确定独立预后因素。 $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 患者特征

研究共纳入94例HNSCC患者(Table 1),中位

年龄 58 岁(范围 16~77 岁),男性患者(75.5%)和肿瘤源自鼻咽的患者(51%)比例较高。其中,64 例患者接受免疫治疗作为一线治疗,16 例患者接受免疫治疗作为三线及后线治疗。对于除鼻咽癌外的 46 例患者中,有 27 例患者(58.7%)在接受免疫治疗前已接受病损切除手术(对于有淋巴结转移的患者进行选择性的淋巴清扫术)。67%患者在初次免疫治疗时处于Ⅳ期,27 例患者进行了驱动基因 *EGFR* 的检测,仅 1 例患者呈 *EGFR* 阴性。78 例患者使用免疫联合化疗方案,同步化疗是以铂类为主的联合化疗方案,使用方案包括:紫杉醇/白蛋白紫杉醇+顺铂/卡铂/奈达铂、吉西他滨+顺铂/卡铂/奈达铂。18 例患者接受免疫联合化疗加靶向治疗,靶向药物均为抗 *EGFR* 单克隆抗体(尼妥珠单抗)。52 例患者接受调强放射治疗(intensity modulated radiation therapy,IMRT),总剂量达 60.06~69.96 Gy,1.82~2.12 Gy/33 f,5 f/qw,其中有 32 例患者(61.5%)行化疗或靶向同步放疗。

2.2 疗效分析

患者每 2 个周期免疫治疗后进行 1 次疗效评价,最后进行最佳总体疗效(best of response,BOR)评价。在 94 例接受免疫检查点抑制剂治疗 HNSCC 患者中,CR 4 例,PR 40 例,SD 40 例,PD 10 例,ORR 为 46.8%,DCR 为 89.4%。一线治疗 ORR 为 57.8%,二线治疗 ORR 为 21.4%,接受三线及以上免疫治疗的患者 ORR 为 25.0%,一线治疗组 ORR 优于后线治疗组($\chi^2=9.791, P=0.007$)。免疫联合化疗加抗血管生成组 ORR 为 72.2%,免疫联合化疗组 ORR 为 42.4%,两组差异有统计学意义($\chi^2=5.120, P=0.024$)(Table 2)。

2.3 生存分析及预后影响因素

43 例患者出现疾病进展,中位 PFS 为 9.0 个月(95%CI:7.6~10.4)(Figure 1)。患者的性别、吸烟、饮酒、肿瘤分化程度、HPV 感染、原发部位、临床分期均不是生存的危险因素。在治疗方案上,PFS 在免疫联合治疗方案方面差异无统计学意义($P>0.05$),接受放疗的患者较未接受的患者预后更好($P=0.049$)。对于非鼻咽癌患者,免疫治疗前行病损切除手术的患者有更长的 PFS($P<0.05$)。年龄 ≤ 60 岁患者有较好的预后(10.7 个月 vs 6.6 个月, $\chi^2=5.109, P=0.024$)(Figure 2)。治疗线亚组分析显示,一线治疗患者 PFS 优于二线和三线治疗及以上患者(10.9 个月 vs 5.9 个月 vs 6.7 个月, $\chi^2=8.353, P=0.015$)(Figure 3)。

根据患者的生存状态和 PFS 时间,使用 X-tile 软件确定 PNI 最佳截断值为 49.4,分为高 PNI 组($PNI>49.4$)55 例和低 PNI 组($PNI\leq 49.4$)38 例,基线 $PNI>49.4$ 与更长的 PFS 有关(11.3 个月 vs 7.3 个月, $\chi^2=5.153, P=0.023$)(Figure 4)。在 48 例鼻咽癌患者中,38 例患者行 *EBER* 检测,其中仅 4 例阴性,基线时有 45 例患者进行了 EB 病毒 DNA 定量检测,有 24 例患者小于最低检出限(最低检出限:400 copies),EBV-DNA 检出阳性的患者预后较差(7.0 个月 vs 11.9 个月, $\chi^2=4.298, P=0.038$)(Figure 5)。

单因素 Cox 分析结果表明,患者行放疗同步化疗或靶向治疗较未接受放疗的患者有更长的 PFS($HR=0.481, 95\%CI:0.232\sim 0.997, P=0.049$)。淋巴结转移 N₃ 期的患者较无淋巴结转移患者接受免疫治疗获益明显($HR=3.353, 95\%CI:1.081\sim 10.395, P=0.036$)(Table 3)。将单因素分析中显著的变量包含在 Cox 多因素回归模型中确定独立预后因素,结果显示,免疫治疗线数是 PFS 的独立预后因素。

3 讨论

本文分析 94 例接受免疫检查点抑制剂治疗的患者临床病理特点与临床结局之间的关系。疗效分析发现一线免疫治疗组 BOR 优于后线免疫治疗组,免疫联合化疗加抗血管生成组 BOR 优于免疫联合化疗组。

EGFR 活化诱导细胞增殖,血管新生成和肿瘤细胞转移。尼妥珠单抗是抗 *EGFR* 抗体,在一项开放标签、Ⅲ期随机试验中,536 例患者被分配到顺铂单药和顺铂联合尼妥珠单抗治疗组。尼妥珠单抗的加入改善 PFS($HR=0.69, 95\%CI:0.53\sim 0.89; P=0.004$)[6];加用尼妥珠单抗有更好的 ORR,但是未明显改善患者的 PFS。放疗具有激活人体免疫系统的潜力[7],电离辐射的作用包括增强肿瘤抗原释放和呈递,促进免疫细胞的启动和活化,肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞密度增加,促进 T 细胞识别肿瘤细胞,增强抗肿瘤作用[8]。我们的结果表明,接受放疗的患者有较好的预后(10.8 个月 vs 7.2 个月, $P=0.049$)。但在一项单中心、随机、Ⅱ期临床试验中,62 例转移性 HNSCC 患者被随机分配到纳武利尤单抗联合或不联合立体定向放疗(stereotactic radiotherapy,SBRT)(在第一剂和第二剂纳武利尤单抗之间),ORR 没有改善(单独使用纳

Table 1 Univariate analysis of 94 patients' clinicopathological features at baseline

Characteristics	N	Percent (%)	χ^2	P
Gender				
Male	71	75.5	0.268	0.604
Female	23	24.5		
Age(years old)				
≤60	59	62.8	5.109	0.024
>60	35	37.2		
Smoking status				
Never smokers	24	25.5	1.696	0.193
Current smokers	21	22.3		
Unknown	49	52.1		
Drinking status				
Never drinkers	20	21.3	3.780	0.052
Current drinkers	32	34.0		
Unknown	42	44.7		
Surgery(Non nasopharyngeal carcinoma)				
No	19	41.3	4.161	0.041
Yes	27	58.7		
Acceptance of radiation therapy				
No	42	44.7	3.829	0.050
Yes	52	55.3		
Degree of differentiation				
Undifferentiated	41	43.6	1.464	0.691
Low differentiation	10	10.6		
Medium differentiation	11	11.7		
High differentiation	6	6.4		
Unknown	26	27.7		
P16				
Negative	16	17.0	0.728	0.394
Positive	6	6.4		
Unknown	72	76.6		
EGFR				
Negative	1	1.1	26.000	<0.001
Positive	26	27.7		
Unknown	67	71.3		
Line of immunotherapy				
First line	64	68.1	8.353	0.015
Second line	14	14.9		
≥ Third line	16	17.0		
Primary site				
Oral cavity(including mucosal lip)	11	11.7	3.369	0.498
Nasopharynx	48	51.1		
Oropharynx	7	7.4		
Hypopharynx and larynx	22	23.4		
Nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses	6	6.4		
Clinical staging at immunotherapy				
II	10	10.6	3.396	0.183
III	21	22.3		
IV	63	67.0		
N staging at immunotherapy				
0	11	11.7	5.941	0.115
1	18	19.1		
2	46	48.9		
3	19	20.2		
Radiotherapy status				
Unaccepted	42	44.7	4.337	0.114
Unsynchronized	20	21.3		
Concurrent radiotherapy with chemotherapy or targeted therapy	32	34.0		
Immunotherapy regimen				
Anti-PD-1+Chemotherapy	73	77.7	0.336	0.845
Anti-PD-1+Chemotherapy+Angiogenesis inhibitor	18	19.1		
Anti-PD-1 monotherapy	3	3.2		

Table 2 Efficacy evaluation in different subgroups[n(%)]

Group	CR	PR	SD	PD	ORR
Total	4(4.25)	40(42.5)	40(42.5)	10(10.6)	44(46.8)
Line of immunotherapy					
First line	3(4.7)	34(53.1)	21(32.8)	6(9.4)	37(57.8)
Second line	1(7.1)	2(14.3)	10(71.4)	1(7.1)	3(21.4)
≥Third line	0	4(25.0)	9(56.3)	3(18.8)	4(25.0)
Immunotherapy regimen					
Anti-PD-1+Chemotherapy	2(2.7)	29(39.7)	33(45.3)	9(12.3)	31(42.4)
Anti-PD-1+Chemotherapy+Angiogenesis inhibitor	2(11.1)	11(50.0)	4(33.3)	1(5.6)	13(72.2)
Anti-PD-1 monotherapy	0	0	3(100)	0	0

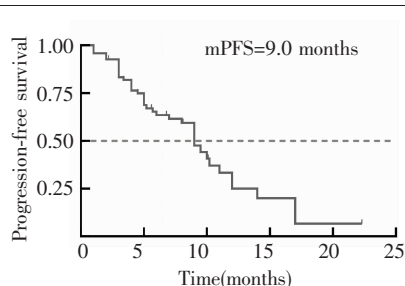


Figure 1 Survival curve of progression-free survival in 94 patients

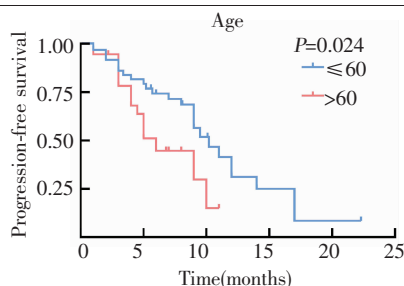


Figure 2 Kaplan-Meier survival curve for progression-free survival according to age

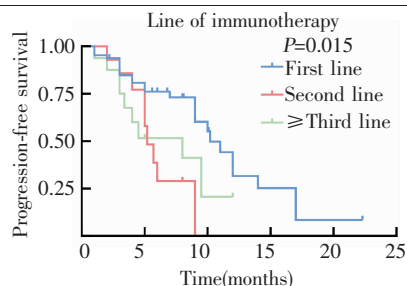
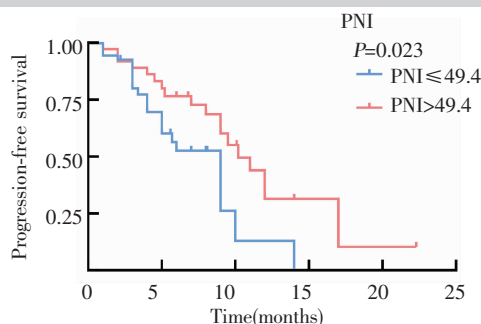


Figure 3 Kaplan-Meier survival curve for progression-free survival according to line of immunotherapy



Note: PNI: prognostic nutritional index

Figure 4 Kaplan-Meier survival curve for progression-free survival according to PNI (cut off=49.4)

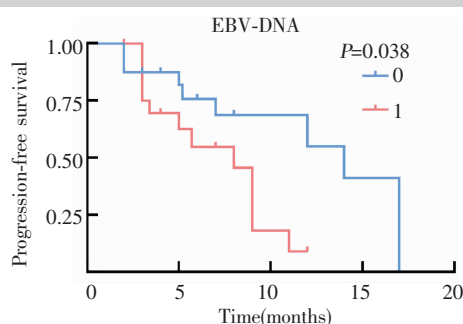


Figure 5 Kaplan-Meier curves survival for progression-free survival according to EBV-DNA in cases with nasopharyngeal cancer

武利尤单抗组为 34.5%，纳武利尤单抗联合 SBRT 组为 29.0%， $P=0.86$)^[9]。手术仍是目前治疗头颈部恶性肿瘤最主要和有效的方法之一，适用于早期及放射线和化疗不敏感的肿瘤。经手术治疗的浅表头颈部肿瘤 3 年总生存率、无复发生存率分别为 88.1%、84.4%^[10]。我们的结果显示，在非鼻咽癌病例中，免疫治疗前行手术治疗的患者有较好的预后。一项开放标签、Ⅲ期随机临床研究比较尼妥珠单抗联合顺铂根治性放疗与顺铂单药根治性放疗治疗局部晚期头颈癌，加用尼妥珠单抗改善了 PFS (HR=0.69, 95% CI: 0.53~0.89, $P=0.004$)，2 年 PFS 分别为 50.1% 和 61.8%^[6]。我们收集的数据中只有 18 例为

免疫联合尼妥珠单抗和 3 例免疫单药治疗，未发现联合用药组与免疫单药组间的 PFS 统计学意义的差异。研究表明，EGFR 过度表达预示着肿瘤的侵袭性、远处转移和对放疗和化疗的抗性增加，是不良预后因素^[11]。本文病例中行 EGFR 检测患者有限，且行 EGFR 检测患者中仅 1 例阴性，虽然 Kaplan-Meier 分析 EGFR 与预后关系显示关联，但我们仍认为无临床意义。EBV 感染激活了鼻咽癌细胞中的 p62-Keap1-NRF2 途径并诱导过氧化物酶 GPX4 的表达，高 GPX4 表达降低 EBV 阳性鼻咽癌细胞的化疗敏感性，并与预后较差有关^[12]。在鼻咽癌患者队列中，基线 EBV-DNA 阳性的患者预后较差(7.0 个月 vs 11.9

Table 3 Univariate and multivariate analysis of clinicopathological parameters about PFS in patients

Variable	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis	
	HR(95% CI)	P	HR(95% CI)	P
Age(years old)				
≤60	Reference		Reference	
>60	2.073(1.069~4.021)	0.031	2.030(0.948~4.347)	0.068
Line of immunotherapy				
First line	Reference		Reference	
Second line	2.731(1.214~6.145)	0.015	2.480(0.924~6.657)	0.071
≥Third line	2.156(0.985~4.716)	0.054	2.707(1.101~6.658)	0.030
N staging at immunotherapy				
0	Reference		Reference	
1	1.545(0.471~5.063)	0.473	1.190(0.316~4.481)	0.797
2	1.716(0.565~5.212)	0.341	1.493(0.463~4.816)	0.503
3	3.353(1.081~10.395)	0.036	3.098(0.945~10.163)	0.062
Radiotherapy status				
Unaccepted	Reference		Reference	
Unsynchronized	0.665(0.304~1.458)	0.309	0.814(0.356~1.861)	0.625
Concurrent radiotherapy with chemotherapy or targeted therapy	0.481(0.232~0.997)	0.049	0.653(0.269~1.583)	0.345
Baseline PNI				
≤49.4	Reference		Reference	
>49.4	0.470(0.238~0.927)	0.029	0.493(0.208~1.166)	0.107

Note: PNI: prognostic nutritional index

个月, $\chi^2=4.298,P=0.038$)。PNI 作为预后生物标志物受到关注^[13]。我们分析发现,PNI≤49.4 患者预后不良,提示 PNI 状态可用于识别不良临床结局的患者。

为了提高头颈部恶性肿瘤的治疗效果,对头颈部晚期肿瘤多倾向于综合治疗,即多学科协同治疗。当然,本研究存在局限性。回顾性研究可能会引入潜在的偏差和混杂变量。此外,P16 和 EGFR 表达状态较少。而且,此项研究是一项范围有限的单中心研究,并受到其特定限制。因此,未来需要大规模、多中心、前瞻性和高质量的研究,以进一步探讨免疫治疗 HNSCC 预后因素,将有助于提供更精确的治疗建议。

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