Lesson 11
M Category

Donna M. Gress, RHIT, CTR
M Assessment

• Different rules for M category
  – Defined by method of assessment
  – Not by time frame (diagnostic vs. surgery) like T and N

• Rationale
  – Critical to know assessment to analyze outcomes
  – Clinical judgment vs. proven microscopically

• Clinical Classification – valid M categories
  – cT; cN; cM0, cM1, pM1

• Pathologic Classification – valid M categories
  – pT; pN; cM0, cM1, pM1
cM Requirements

- cM0 only requires history and physical exam (H&P)
  - Does not mean registrar has to find H&P report in med record
  - Means physician performed physical exam on patient
- No symptoms or signs of metastasis is cM0
- Imaging is not necessary to assign cM0
- Infer status as cM0 unless known clinical M1 (cM1)
- Optimal extent of testing (although none is required)
  - Understand workup ordered based on T, N, and other results
  - NCCN Guidelines
  - American College of Radiology Appropriateness Criteria

- cM1
  - Clinical evidence of metastasis by physical exam
  - Imaging showing evidence of metastasis
  - Invasive procedures including exploratory surgery, without bx
pM Requirements

• pM1 requires positive biopsy of metastatic site
  – Biopsy shows presence of cancer in metastatic site

• Negative biopsy of suspected metastatic site is cM0
  – Biopsy shows absence of cancer in metastatic site
  – Assign cM0
  – Do NOT assign pM0

• pM0
  – NOT a valid category
  – May NOT be assigned
  – Undefined concept
    • Would require microscopic exam of all tissues in the body
    • Even autopsy does not sample every single piece of tissue
Uncertain Information

• Define uncertain information
  – Ambiguity about involvement
  – Details to meet staging criteria are unclear
  – Choosing between two categories

• Correct M category for uncertain information
  – Lower or less advanced category used

• Define unknown information
  – Physician must know M status
  – Not used to describe situation where registrar does not have access to the information

• No M category for unknown information
  – Unknown is NOT valid for M
  – Never assign lowest category for unknown
MX NotValid

• MX
  – NOT a valid category
  – May NOT be assigned
  – Pathologist may NOT use MX
    • Leaves M blank if no metastatic tissue examined (not applicable)
    • Leaves M blank if metastatic tissue examined does not show cancer
    • Pathologist can only assign pM1 - tissue examined showed cancer
  – New to 7th edition

• M status critical
  – M status changes stage group
  – M status drastically changes patient care and treatment plan
Thank you

Donna M. Gress, RHIT, CTR
AJCC Technical Specialist

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633 N. Saint Clair, Chicago, IL 6011-3211
cancerstaging.org

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