



Lesson 18

M Category



- Isolated tumor cells in metastatic sites
 - Circulating cells in the blood
 - Micrometastasis (< 0.2mm) in bone marrow or nonregional tissue
 - Histologically visible micrometastasis

 - Identified by
 - IHC
 - Molecular techniques

 - Designated as cM0(i+)
 - Note this is clinical M0 since pM0 does not exist

 - Defined in chapters where this commonly occurs

 - May be prognostic for recurrence or survival

- Circulating tumor cells – CTC
- CTC are identified in
 - Blood
- Disseminated tumor cells – DTC
- DTC are identified in
 - Distant organs or nonregional tissue
 - Bone Marrow

M Category for Classification

- Assign appropriate M category for clinical classification
- Clinical stage M category based on **assessment method**
- Example for colon cancer diagnostic workup
 - CT guided liver biopsy positive for mets
 - CT chest shows lung mets
 - Assign pM1 for clinical stage

 - Do **NOT** just use cM1 in clinical staging and pM1 in pathological staging
 - Stage is **NOT** to document all findings
 - Only one M category for each stage
 - AJCC does not have rules to assign cT cN cM pM clinical stage

M Category for Classification

- Assign appropriate M category for pathological classification
- Pathological stage M category based on **assessment method**
- Example for breast cancer mastectomy
 - CT chest shows lung mets
 - Bone biopsy positive for mets
 - Assign pM1 for pathological stage

 - Do **NOT** just use cM1 in clinical staging and pM1 in pathological staging
 - Stage is **NOT** to document all findings
 - Only one M category for each stage
 - AJCC does not have rules to assign pT pN cM pM pathological stage

M Category for Classification

- Do **NOT** use registry M data fields to document test results
 - Difference between **coding systems** and **assigning AJCC stage**
- Coding systems
 - All data fields are utilized to document all available information
 - Code every field, none are left blank
- Assigning AJCC stage
 - Only one M category assigned for each stage
 - M category assigned independently for each classification
 - Not based on M category used in other classifications
 - M category may be left blank if the information is unknown
 - **Assign M category** based on
 - **Assessment method**
 - **For classification time frame**



Developed through generous support from
the American Cancer Society.



Thank You