



Introduction to AJCC Staging

Debunking Urban Legends in Staging



Overview of Debunking Urban Legends in Staging Series

- Identify the role of staging
 - Patient care
 - Data analysis
- Comprehend the general rules applied to staging
 - Separating fact from fiction
 - Rules for clinical and pathological classifications
 - Rules for assigning T, N, M, and stage group
- Highlights of 8th Edition and Version 9

- Cancer originates in a single cell
- Cell continues to divide and grow
 - In organ of origin (primary site)
 - Spreads to adjacent tissue or regional node drainage areas
 - Spreads to distant organs or structures
- Cancer spreads
 - From primary through bloodstream into distant organs
 - Without involving adjacent organs and regional nodes
- Stage describes this process

- Detailed elements at a point in time
 - Local tumor extent and if it has spread from organ or site of origin (primary site) – T category
 - Involvement by location or number of regional lymph nodes – N category
 - Distant metastatic spread through bloodstream or lymphatics – M category
- Detailed elements grouped into broad categories
 - Anatomic Stage/Prognostic Stage Groups – Stage I through IV
- Points in time of the cancer patient's care
 - Diagnostic workup – Clinical
 - From diagnostic workup until after initial surgical treatment – Pathological
 - After neoadjuvant treatment, before surgery – Posttherapy Clinical
 - After neoadjuvant treatment followed by surgical treatment – Posttherapy Pathological

- Staging is a common language
 - Developed by medical professionals
 - Used to communicate information about a disease
- Staging is designed to
 - Aid in patient treatment planning
 - Give some indication of prognosis
 - Assist in evaluation of treatment results
 - Facilitate exchange of information
 - Contribute to continuing investigation of cancer
 - Support cancer control activities

- **Clinical stage**
 - Assess cancer at time of diagnosis and workup
 - Cancer treatment guidelines based on stage
- **Pathological stage**
 - Assess cancer after surgical resection as primary treatment, including all clinical info
 - Prognosis and survival information based on stage
- **Posttherapy Clinical Stage**
 - Assess cancer after neoadjuvant treatment prior to surgery
 - Evaluates clinical response to neoadjuvant treatment in order to plan appropriate surgery
- **Posttherapy Pathological Stage**
 - Assess cancer after neoadjuvant treatment followed by surgery
 - Comprehensively evaluates pathological response to neoadjuvant treatment

Role of Staging – Data Analysis

- Facilitates data collection and analysis worldwide
- Used to develop treatment guidelines
- Evaluate results of treatment
- Prognosis and survival information

- Chapter 1: Principles of Cancer Staging
- Expanded text
 - Everything you always wanted to know
- Clearly defined rules
 - Debunks rumors and urban legends
- Tables of rules
 - General rules
 - Classifications
 - T, N, and M
 - Stage groups