



Lesson 9

T Category



- T criteria based on size and/or direct extension
- Criteria specific to
 - Anatomy of primary site
 - Homogeneous or heterogeneous (different tissue layers)
 - Biologic behavior of cancers for that site
 - How it grows and spreads, involvement that changes the prognosis
- Criteria for clinical classification cT
 - Physical exam, imaging, endoscopy, biopsy, surgical exploration
- Criteria for pathological classification pT
 - Resection of tumor, may require resection of organ/structure

- Tumor size recorded using whole millimeters
- For size reported
 - In smaller units such as tenth or hundredth of mm
 - Round to nearest whole millimeter for assigning stage
 - Round 1-4 down, 5-9 up
- Breast Exception:
 - >1mm to <2mm reported as 2mm
 - Prevents classifying these as microinvasive T1mi
- Rationale
 - Staging groups similar cases together

Multiple Tumor Pieces

- pT generally based on single resected specimen
- Tumor resected in multiple pieces
 - Reasonable estimate of size and extension
 - Guidance from disease specific rules
- Estimate may require
 - Orientation by surgeon
 - Comparison to imaging
 - Pathologist working with surgeon and radiologist to determine T
- Registrar
 - Cannot add tumor pieces to assign size and/or extension
 - Does not know orientation of tumor pieces

- Define uncertain information
 - Ambiguity about involvement
 - Details to meet staging criteria are unclear
 - Choosing between two categories
- Correct T category for uncertain information
 - For Physicians only: lower or less advanced category used
 - For Registrars: T category blank
- Correct T subcategory for uncertain information
 - For Physicians only: lower or less advanced subcategory used
 - For Registrars: main T category used

- Uncertain is different from unknown
- Define unknown information
 - Unknown to the physician
 - Not used to describe situation where registrar does not have access to the information
- Correct T category for unknown information
 - Never assign lowest category
 - For Physicians only: assign TX
 - For Registrars:
 - If physicians state TX, registrars assign TX
 - Without evidence unknown to physicians, registrars assign T blank



Developed through generous support from
the American Cancer Society.



Thank You