EARLY GASTRIC CANCER

CURRENT STATUS OF DIAGNOSIS

Edited by

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Introduction

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Presidential Address

E. Grundmann

Patholog. Institut der Universität, Münster

The first two symposia of our society dealt with epidemiology of cancer and mechanisms of carcinogenesis; as suggested by Dr. Grunze and Dr. Witte, the present one is dedicated to a clinical topic. Both our chairmen have prepared this conference by selecting participants and their papers and by organizing the program of discussions. Dr. Grunze is a member of the society of long standing whose helpful co-operation is always present. Beside him, we have my old friend Dr. Witte, our guest, whom I wish to thank for his readiness to lead this conference and to make his expert knowledge available to us.

Like other malignant disorders, gastric cancer has certain pre-stages where it is still restricted to the mucous membrane. A pioneer in this field of research is Prof. Gutmann of Paris; he was the first to establish the value of early diagnosis for a successful treatment of gastric cancer, and we are honoured by his attendance at this symposium. The same is true for our Japanese colleagues who by introducing the fibrescope, have contributed so much to our understanding of stomach micro-carcinoma. We are glad to welcome Prof. Kawai, Director of the Endoscopy Department of Kyoto University and a representative of this leading gastroenterological school. The German participants of our conference are mainly followers of Prof. Henning and the "Erlangen Group". The mention of this group calls to mind various technical improvements in endoscopy, as well as fundamental cytological and histological studies.

We feel honoured by the presence of our foreign colleagues from Austria, Brazil, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Norway and the United Kingdom, who did not refuse the inconvenience of travelling in order to attend this meeting and to participate in our discussion.

I should like to stress the fact that progress in science can only be promoted by the interchange of experience and knowledge in the course of international meetings such as ours today. The "half-life" of scientific knowledge is shrinking rapidly, but this is not the moment for giving up. Our patients are always entitled to get the best treatment available, and that can be guaranteed only by keeping science up to date.

In my capacity as a pathologist and histologist I should like to remind the audience briefly of some facts. In Germany, stomach cancer is still the tumor incurring the highest death rate. It is closely followed by bronchus carcinoma; only a few cities show an inverted relation of these two. High mortality statistics and a discouraging rate of therapeutical success may give rise to a feeling of resignation. The five-year-survival rates are below 10%; the cause seems to be none other than a

lack of early diagnosis. More than 50% of all gastric cancer patients are already in a state of inoperability on the day of their first diagnosis. When they undergo surgery, i.e. radical removal of the tumor and its metastases, these patients are yet bound to die within two years' time.

Survival chances for gastric cancer patients do improve if the tumor can be detected in an early stage. You are all familiar with the progress in early diagnosis of obstetric carcinoma which was made possible by the invention and application of new methods. For the past two decades and under the direction of my predecessor, Prof. Flaskamp, our society has contributed a great deal of leadership and practical help to this campaign. For anatomical reasons, the early diagnosis of gastric cancer is definitely more difficult than that of cervix carcinoma.

This audience will have to discuss and evaluate all future aspects of the problem, notwithstanding many promising developments in radiology, endoscopy, histology and cytology that have recently shown us new paths. Epidemiology of cancer and especially of gastric carcinoma have been topics of an international symposium held by our society last year (GRUNDMANN and TULINIUS, 1972), therefore this item has been excluded from this year's program. Nevertheless, I wish to inform you of some results of the previous conference:

The frequency of gastric carcinoma varies in different parts of the world; in the USA and in Australia it is relatively low, in Japan, Chile, Poland and Germany, the incidence is relatively high. Today, as we are aware that racial components are of no importance, the disparity can be traced back to two factors:

- 1. The mean life expectancy of the population in general. Stomach carcinoma is a tumor which occurs at an advanced age of the patient, usually above fifty years. Therefore a lower rate of stomach carcinoma will be found in countries with shorter life expectancy. Statistics of Third World countries are influenced by this fact.
- Environmental factors are important, but nutritional factors and eating habits in particular. In general, inhabitants of cities are in a better position than people living in rural areas, and females are better off than males (STASZEW-SKI, 1972).

Fortunately, stomach cancer is on the whole continually decreasing. Death due to a malignant tumor of the stomach has declined in Germany from 54 per 100.000 males in 1956, to 41,8 in 1967. The same decline is evident in other countries, above all in the USA, but also in Japan (DOLL, MUIR and WATERHOUSE, 1970) which has the highest incidence of stomach cancer in the world.

Gyne cologists have been great pioneers in the field of early cancer detection, and that is why we have asked Dr. Zinser, one of these pioneers, to give us the first lecture. We have invited him to report on approved models and methods in gynecology in order to provide aims and ideals for which we could strive in gastroenterology.

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Some Historical and Topical Remarks Made by the Chairmen

H. Grunze and S. Witte

Innere Abteilung der Krankenanstalten, Düren und Medizinische Abteilung des Krankenhauses der Evang. Diakonissenanstalt, Karlsruhe

Early diagnosis of gastric cancer, being a major step towards gastric cancer cure, is a challenge of long duration.

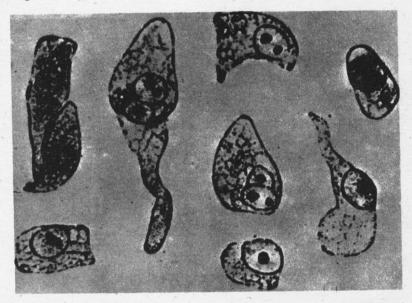


Fig. 1. G. MARINI. Typical tumor cells in a gastric washing (1909)

It was in 1909 (Fig. 1) when MARINI in Bologna decided that in the future, physicians convinced of the usefulness of cytological examinations on gastric washings as firmly as they were already convinced of the value of microscopical analysis of the urine sediment, would no longer retard the diagnosis of a gastric cancer until the tumor is palpable, i.e. in a stage when surgical intervention, if not definitely pernicious, would not be of any use whatsoever.

All efforts for promoting early gastric cancer diagnosis have been listed in a complete survey by WANKE (1971). The names of TURCK (1895), KONJETZNY (1913), PAPANICOLAOU (1947), HENNING (1947) and especially that of Dr.GUTMANN (1932) should be mentioned. It was GUTMANN who together with his Paris colleagues, inaugurated the modern synoptic approach towards early gastric cancer diagnosis, as is documented in Figs. 2 and 3. The widespread use of combined

LE CANCER DE L'ESTOMAC AU DÉBUT

ÉTUDE CLINIQUE, RADIOLOGIQUE ET ANATOMO-PATHOLOGIQUE

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PRÉFACE DU P. A. GOSSET

AVEC 563 FIGURES DANS LE TEXTE

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LES FORMES LATENTES LES FORMES NON DOULOUREUSES LES FORMES DOULOUREUSES

ÉTUDE RADIOLOGIQUE

Technique de l'examen radiologique dans le cancer du début, par le DFJ, GARCIA-CALINGIAS

Diagnostic radiologique de la niche bénigne et de la niche maligne......

MÉTHODES D'EXAMEN DIVERSES

LA GASTROSCOPIE .

LE CHINISME GASTRIQUE.

LA RECHERCHE DES HÉMORRAGIES OUGLITES

ÉTUDE ANATOMIQUE

IDENTIFICATION ANATOMIQUE DU CANCER GASTRIQUE AU DÉBUT

Fig. 2. Photo set-up composed of the front-page and some items of the contents of Dr. GUTMANNS monography. The modern synoptic approach of this pioneer book is obvious



Fig. 3.= Fig. 436 of Dr. GUTMANNS Monography: Ulcer with partial cicatrisation and cancerisation. C: Granulomatous ground, B: Adenomatous knot, partly degenerated (left of the arrow). The 3 other arrows indicate epthelial areas being transformed into cancer

radiological, endoscopical and histological examinations of patients in today's diagnostic centres has its precursor in the work of this French research group. Another rapid improvement in diagnostic techniques was stimulated by the gastrofiberscope which had been originally devised by HIRSCHOWITZ (1958) and was then improved in Japan, where the leading centres of the world for detection of the so-called "early gastric cancer" have been established (Ref. see Monograph ed. by MURAKAMI, 1971).

All over the world, diagnostic results of colleagues interested in early cancer diagnosis are rather promising, as far as single and individual examinations are concerned. Since gastric cancer has a very high frequency it now appears justified to raise the question whether, besides the well-known Japanese efforts towards mass screening, the time may have come for European programs, too. With intention to analyse this problem the "Society for fighting Cancer, North-Rhine-Westphalia" (GBK) has organized this symposium, and all participants have been asked by the chairmen to answer, if possible, the following questions:

- 1. Which stages of gastric cancer disease have been detected so far?
- 2. Which technical means, efforts and ways of organisation have been employed in hospitals, outpatient clinics, in the G. P's consulting room or in mass screening? In the present stage of development, are there already any propositions for an improvement of procedures such as may result from the participants' own experience?
- 3. Which difficulties and problems have been met so far?

4. Were the expenditures in various fields of application justified from an economical point of view? Would anybody want to advocate a pilot study on gastric cancer mass screening in Europe, or, which other problem should have priority before such studies were taken up?

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Experiences in Early Detection of Carcinoma Colli Uteri

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As you all know, the gynaecologist has at his disposal certain optical methods for detecting cancer in the cervix uteri: colposcopy and colpomicroscopy. Besides these, there is another valuable method, the colpocytology. The advantage of the latter lies in that material for examination can be taken directly out of the areas most susceptible for tumor. The application of these methods is simple. In fact, they can be used in every routine examination, and may be repeated as often as necessary. We see, therefore, that favourable conditions are existing for extensive medical examinations. Their effectiveness and efficiency in cases of cervix cancer shall be critically appreciated.

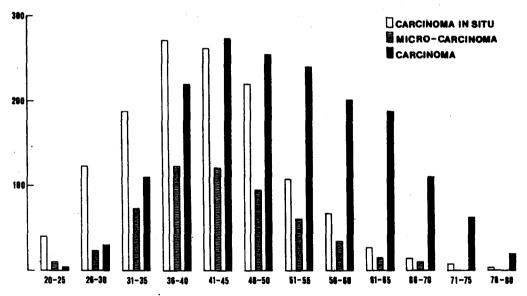


Fig. 1. Age-distribution of 3598 cases (1957 - 1964)

The colposcopic viewing of the ectocervix with magnification from 10 to 40x will give characteristic pictures which, in principle, could be attributed to irregularities in the morphological structure of the capillary vessels. This corresponds to

a variety of atypical epithelium occurring in areas of squamous and columnar epithelium with different behaviour. (Nearly 70% of all pre-cancerous diseases could be recognised optically with the help of acetic acid and SCHILLER's test). However, about 30 % of the atypical epithelia evade the colposcopic viewing because they are hidden intracervically.

After vital staining of the surface of the portio vaginalis with toluidine blue, it is possible to judge, with the help of colpomicroscopy, the structure of the nuclei in the superficial cell layer. There is, in fact, nothing but cytology in vivo to supply the necessary information about the situation in the ectocervix. Its assertive value is almost equivalent to that of colposcopy.

In gynaecology, colpocytology is one of the most important methods for cancer detection. The cytological interpretation of a cervical smear allows differentiation between benign changes of cells derived from metaplastic epithelium and other cell types originating from dysplasia.

From the constituent of cells found in a cervical smear, one can recognize the atypical epithelial proliferations related to carcinoma in situ; finally, a pointer to genuine exuberance of cancer cells can be expected. The indication for a histological examination based on cytological findings, will be laid rather early in the dysplasia stage and not wait for final diagnostic corrective.

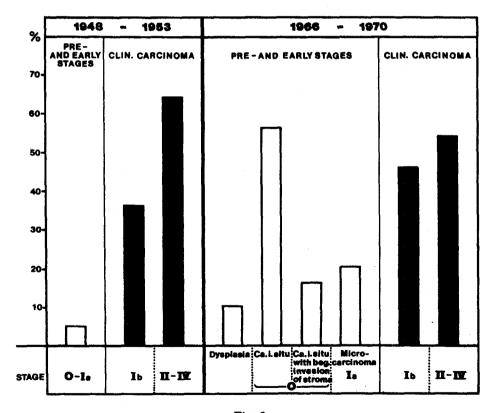


Fig. 2