

Histological Pattern of Ovarian Neoplasma

Zubair Ahmad, Naila Kayani, Sheema H. Hasan, Suhail Muzaffar (Department of Pathology, The Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi.)

Muhammad Shafiq Gill (Department of Pathology, the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi.)

Abstract

Objective: To see the morphological pattern of benign and malignant ovarian neoplasms.

Method: Retrospective study of all consecutive cases of ovarian neoplasms diagnosed at Aga Khan University Hospital between 1st January 1993 and 30th September 1998.

Setting: The Section of Histopathology, AKUH, Karachi.

Observation: Of 855 ovarian tumours 506 (59.18%) were benign and 349 (40.81%) malignant. Surface epithelial - stromal tumours comprised 63.50% of all tumours. Benign cystic teratoma was the commonest benign tumour (35.17% of all benign tumours) and serous cystadenocarcinoma was the commonest malignant tumour (33.33% of all malignant tumours). Mucinous cystadenocarcinomas are more common in our population as compared to the West and borderline and malignant mucinous tumours occur at a younger age group. Malignant germ cell tumours are also common in our population.

Conclusion: Except for the greater frequency of malignant mucinous and germ cell tumours, the findings of our series correspond to the published Western data (JPMA 50:416, 2000).

Introduction

Ovarian neoplasms are common tumours in females comprising 23% of all gynecologic tumours and are the most common gynecologic malignancy¹. They are the 5th leading cause of cancer deaths in women in the U.S.A². A local study at (AFIP), Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Rawalpindi showed that gynecological malignancies are not uncommon among Pakistan females³. Women between 65 and 84 years of age have ovarian cancer incidence rates 2 to 3 times higher than younger women⁴. A major problem with these tumours is that they initially give rise only to vague signs and symptoms. Ovarian tumours are notorious for their large size and their frequent association with relatively mild symptoms⁵. Risk Factors for ovarian cancer are not well defined. However there is general agreement on two: nulliparity and family history. A higher frequency of carcinoma is seen in unmarried women and in married women with low parity⁶. The aim of our study is to determine, in a large series of patients, the histological pattern of ovarian neoplasms and to correlate our findings with national and international published data.

Material and Methods

To establish the histological pattern and frequency of benign and malignant ovarian neoplasms, all specimens received in the Section of Histopathology, AKUH over a period of 5 years and 9 months, i.e., from 1st January 1993 to 30th September 1998 were reviewed.

All 855 specimens of ovarian tumours were fixed in 10% buffered formalin and allowed to stay overnight. Specimens were grossed and adequate representative sections were taken according to the guidelines given in Rosai⁷ with special emphasis given in case of large specimens to solid foci, areas adjacent to the ovarian surface and bases of papillary formations.

The sections were then routinely processed under standardized conditions for paraffin embedding. Sections were then cut and stained with hematoxylin and eosin using standard procedures. When required, special stains such as PAS and Reticulin and immunohistochemistry using monoclonal antibodies by PAP technique, were performed. The histological characterization of ovarian tumours

was done according to the WHO classification of 1995⁸.

Results

Of 855 ovarian tumors, 506 (59.18%) were benign, 28 (3.27%) were borderline and 321 (37.54%) were malignant. They were subdivided into 5 major categories: Surface epithelial-stromal tumours 543 (63.50%) cases, Germ cell tumours 232 (27.13%) cases, sex cord-stromal tumours 50 (5.84%) cases (Tables 1,2 and 3).

Table 1. Breakup of 543 surface epithelial tumours in our study into benign and malignant categories.

Histological Types	No.	%
Benign Tumours	293	53.95
1. Serous Cystadenoma	159	29.28
2. Serous Cystadenofibroma	38	6.99
3. Mucinous Cystadenoma	92	16.94
4. Brenner Tumour	4	0.73
Borderline Tumours	28	5.15
1. Borderline Serous Tumour	14	2.57
2. Borderline Mucinous Tumour	14	2.57
Malignant Tumours	222	40.88
1. Serous Cystadenocarcinoma	107	19.70
2. Mucinous Cystadenocarcinoma	55	10.12
3. Endometrioid Carcinoma	42	7.73
4. Clear Cell Carcinoma	7	1.28
5. Malignant-Mixed Mullerian Tumour	1	0.18
6. Undifferentiated (poorly differentiated Carcinoma	9	1.65
7. Pseudomyxoma Peritonei	1	0.18

Table 2. Breakup of 232 germ cell tumours in our study into benign and malignant categories.

Histological types	No.	%
Benign Tumours	186	80.17
1. Benign Cystic Teratoma (Dermoid Cyst)	178	76.72
2. Struma Ovarii	8	3.44
Malignant Tumours	46	19.82
1. Dysgerminoma	23	9.91
2. Yolk Sac Tumour	8	3.44
3. Embryonal Carcinoma	2	0.86
4. Choriocarcinoma	1	0.43
5. Malignant Teratoma	6	2.58
6. Mixed Germ Cell Tumour	6	2.58

Table 3. Breakup of 50 sex cord-stromal tumours in our study into benign and malignant categories.

Histological Types	No.	%
Benign Tumours	26	52
1. Fibroma	15	30
2. Thecoma	8	16
3. Sertoli-Leydig cell tumour	2	4
4. Sclerosing Stromal tumour	1	2
Malignant Tumours	24	48
1. Granulosa Cell tumour	24	48
- AGCT	21	87.5*
- JGCT	3	12.5*

*** of granulosa cell tumours.**

The fourth category included tumours which were not specific to the ovary- there were 9 (1.05%) such tumours and included 7 cases of lymphoma and 1 case each of leukemia and benign leiomyoma. The fifth category was of 21 (2.45%) of metastatic tumors of the ovary. The 5 commonest benign tumours were benign cystic teratoma (35.17% of all benign tumours), serous cystadenoma (31.42%), mucinous cystadenoma (18.18%), serous cystadenofibroma (7.51%) and fibroma (2.96% of all benign tumours). The Commonest malignant tumours were serous cystadenocarcinoma (33.33%), mucinous cystadenocarcinoma (17.13%), endometrioid carcinoma (13.08%), granulosa cell tumour (7.47%) and

dysgenninoma (7.16%). the majority of patients with begin tumors were younger than 40 years (75%) and malignant tumors older than 40 years(59%) of age (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4. Age distribution of the five commonest benign tumours in our study (n=506).

Age Group (years)	Benign Cystic Teratoma (178)	Serous Cystadenoma (159)*	Mucinous Cystadenoma (92)**	Serous Cystadeno-fibroma (38)**	Fibroma (15)
0-9	2	-	-	-	1
10-19	8	5	3	-	-
20-29	78	48	25	14	4
30-39	60	47	30	9	3
40-49	19	32	11	7	4
50-59	8	10	10	2	1
60-69	3	1	4	2	1
70+	-	5	3	-	1
Total	178	148	86	34	15

*Age known in 148 cases.

**Age known in 86 cases.

***Age known in 34 cases

Table 5. Age distribution of the five commonest malignant tumours in our study (n=349).

Age group (Years)	Serous Cystadenocarcinoma (107)*	Mucinous Cystadenocarcinoma (55)**	Endometrioid carcinoma (42)***	Granulosa Cell Tumour (24)	Dysgerminoma (23)
0-9	-	-	-	-	1
10-19	1	-	-	2	8
20-29	7	8	4	3	11
30-39	23	17	5	5	2
40-49	27	8	12	2	-
50-59	21	10	7	6	1
60-69	20	5	7	5	-
70+	4	2	2	1	-
Total	103	50	37	24	23

*Age known in 103 cases.

**Age known in 50 cases.

***Age known in 37 cases

Discussion

Ovarian cancers rank among the ten commonest cancers in Pakistani women. Their ranking varied from second to fifth in various Pakistani studies⁹⁻¹². The number of cases reported in different series ranged from 61 to 285^{3,14-17}. The present series reports 855 cases of malignant ovarian tumors. A comparison of the salient features of the results of our study with other Pakistani studies is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Relative frequencies of the five commonest benign ovarian tumours in our study compared with other local studies.

Type	Saeed (14)	Muzaffar (15)	Jamal (16)*	Zaman (17)	Present study
Bengin Cystic Teratoma	38.09%	39.74%	-	30.35%	35.17%
Serous Cystade- noma	38.09%	17.94%	16.49%	42.85%	31.42%
Mucinous Cystade- -noma	19.04%	33.33%	7.21%	17.85%	18.18%
Serous Cystade- nofibroma	-	-	-	3.57%	7.51%
Fibroma	-	-	-	1.78%	2.96%

*11 tumours grouped together as 'miscellaneous' included Benign Cystic Teratoma, Cystadenofibroma, Fibroma etc.

Table 7. Relative frequencies of the five commonest malignant ovarian tumours in our study compared with other local studies.

Type	Saeed (14)	Muzaffar (15)	Jamal (16)	Jamal (3)	Zaman (17)	Present study
Serous Cystade Nocar- cinoma	27.5%	27.58%	38.46%	30%*	15.90%	30.65%
Mucinous Cystadeno- carcinma	25%	48.27%	23.07%	45%*	36.36%	15.75%
Endrome- trioid carcinoma	-	-	-	5%*	4.54%	12.03%
Granulosa Cell Tumor	-	-	-	-	15.90%	6.87%
Dysger- ninoma	-	-	-	3.06%**	13.63%	6.59%

*of all malignant epithelial ovarian tumours.

**of all malignant ovarian tumours.

Similar to Western data^{7,18,19} and other Pakistani studies^{3,14,15,17}, surface epithelial-stromal tumours comprised the major histologic type. Serous cystadenocarcinoma was the commonest of the malignant surface epithelial - stromal tumours followed by mucinous cystadenocarcinoma and endometrioid carcinoma. However, in some local studies^{15,17}, mucinous cystadenocarcinoma was the commonest malignant surface epithelial-stromal tumour followed by serous cystadenocarcinoma. It seems that mucinous tumours are more common in our population as compared to the West where endometrioid carcinoma ranks second behind serous cystadenocarcinoma^{7,18,19}. In one of the local studies¹⁷, endometrioid carcinoma trails even behind granulosa cell tumour among malignant ovarian tumours. The mean age of patients with benign surface epithelial-stromal tumours in our study was 30.39 years while that of malignant surface epithelial - stromal tumours was 43.75 years. However, the majority of borderline and invasive mucinous tumours were below 40 years of age suggesting that malignant mucinous tumours may occur in a younger age group in our population. Only 42.02% patients were 40 years or older. This finding contrasts with Western data, which reports that the majority of borderline and malignant mucinous tumours occur in the 4th to 7th decade of life¹⁹. In contrast, 67.76% of borderline and malignant serous tumours and 76.19% of endometrioid carcinoma patients were 40

years or older.

Germ cell turnouts comprised 27:13% of all ovarian turnouts in our series, which is higher than the 15-20% incidence rate reported in Western data¹⁸. Malignant germ cell tumours comprised 14.02% of all primary ovarian malignancies in our study. This is significantly higher than the 3.5% reported in the Western population¹⁸ Jamal et al³. had also reported a rate of 3.6% while. Muzaffer et al¹⁵. reported a rate of 6.89% for malignant germ cell tumours. However, in Zaman's series¹⁷, malignant germ cells turnouts comprised 20.93% of all primary malignant tumours.

Memo and Jaffe¹ had reported that germ cells turnouts account for nearly 60% of all ovarian neoplasms in women under 20 years of age. Our findings were similar, with germ cell tumours comprising 58.33% of all ovarian tumours in patients below 20 years of age. The mean age of benign germ cell tumours in our study was 32.27 years. However, the 8 patients with struma ovarii had a mean age of 47.87 years; seventy seven percent of patients with benign cystic teratoma were between 20 and 39 years of age. Western data also indicate that the peak incidence of benign cystic teratoma is in the third decade²⁰ The mean age of malignant germ cell tumours in our study was 22 years. This finding corresponds to the published data²¹. as 82.60% cases of dysgerminoma in our series were, between 10 and 29 years of age.

The mean age of sex cord-stromal turnouts in our series was 37.09 years for benign tumours and 43.83 years for malignant turnouts. The metastatic tumours in our study had a mean age of 40.94 years. This large series further clarifies the pattern of ovarian neoplasms in Pakistan.

According to our study, surface epithelial-stromal turnouts are the commonest types of ovarian turnouts; Benign cystic teratoma is the commonest benign tumour (35.17% of all benign tumours), while serous cystadenocarcinoma is the commonest malignant tumour (33.33% of all malignant tumours). Borderline and malignant mucinous tumours appear to be more common and occur in a younger age group in our population as compared to the West. Malignant germ cell tumours also appear to be more common in our population.

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