

Division of Gynecology

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Activities 2007. The Division of Gynecology provides all services involving the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of gynecologic oncology patients. The Division includes the Unit of Gynecologic Oncology, mainly dedicated to chemotherapy treatments, and the Unit of Preventive Gynecology, mainly dedicated to diagnosis and treatment of genital cancer precursors. Each staff member is a fully-trained gynecologic oncologist responsible for various activities within the Division, including surgery (minor, major and minimally invasive: laparoscopic and robotic surgery), chemotherapy treatments, research, clinical trials, and early diagnosis.

Clinicians from the Division of Gynecology were principal investigators in several International trials to determine the best treatment for women with ovarian cancer. In co-operation with scientists from the Clinical Trials Unit of the Medical Research Council (MRC), they coordinated the ICON₁ (International Collaborative Ovarian Neoplasm) international trial, which established the role of adjuvant chemotherapy in patients with early stage ovarian cancer. The Division of Gynecology also led the Italian arm of the ICON₄ trial, which studied the effect of Paclitaxel plus platinum chemotherapy versus conventional platinum-based chemotherapy in patients with ovarian cancer who had relapsed after a treatment-free period of more than six months. The results indicated that women with relapsed ovarian cancer may live longer when treated with Paclitaxel combined plus platinum-based agents. For patients with advanced ovarian cancer a trial in collaboration with the US National Institutes of Health and the International Collaborative Ovarian Neoplasm (ICON) has recently demonstrated that the addition of a third cytotoxic agent to standard treatment was not associated with improved clinical outcomes.

Among the surgical activities particular attention is devoted to fertility preserving surgery in young patients with borderline ovarian tumors and early-stage ovarian and cervical cancer. The division has also the facilities and the



experience to perform major surgery such as extensive cytoreduction in patients with advanced ovarian cancer and pelvic exenteration with IORT (intra-operative radiotherapy) in patients with recurrent cervical, endometrial and vulvar cancer.

A multi center paper showed the benefit in terms of progression free survival in patients with ovarian cancer randomized to receive lymph node dissection, compared to no such resection. Overall survival however was unchanged and the toxicity and the morbidity of the operation was the significant factor in time of recovery of patients post operatively.

Another major area of interest is the effort to evaluate less invasive surgical staging modalities in order to reduce morbidity while retaining adequate accuracy; for this purpose an observational study conducted in cooperation with other EU centers showed the safety of omitting complete groin dissection in patients affected by early stage vulvar cancer with negative sentinel node. Furthermore, a new trial regarding the efficacy of replacing complete groin dissection by adjuvant radiotherapy will be activated in patients with positive sentinel node.

Finally the application of minimally invasive robotic surgery in therapeutic approach to the different gynecological

Gynaecology

Admissions		Day Hospital	
Admissions	3,201	Cycles	-
-Surgery Adm	1,394	-Surgery Cyc	-
-Medical Adm	1,807	-Medical Cyc	-
Surgical Index	43,55%	Surgical Index	0,00%
Days	4,432	Treatments	-
Alos	1,38	Alos Treat	-
ARW	10,60	ARW	-



malignancies, such as endometrial, and cervical cancer (simple and radical hysterectomy plus lymphadenectomy) is a new field of interest.

The Unit of Preventive Gynecology has experience in laser surgery for cervical, vaginal and vulvar pre-cancerous lesions, operative hysteroscopy, and transvaginal US for early detection and management of ovarian cancer. Ongoing studies include HPV testing in the follow-up of patients submitted to conization, HPV self-sampling, HPV vaccination in adolescents, use of sono-hystero-graphy and liquid based endometrial cytology to detect early endometrial cancer, diagnostic accuracy of histoscanning.

The Unit of Gynecologic Oncology has also a close cooperation with Experimental Oncology Department in order to conduct translational science projects.

In addition to their clinical and research activities members of the Division also have university and institutional teaching responsibilities that mainly involve training residents and fellows, but they are also involved in Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs.