Chirurgia (Bucur). 2019;114(2): 174-178
http://dx.doi.org/10.21614/chirurgia.114.2.174

Watch and Wait Strategy for Rectal Cancer: 15 Years After the First Published Study. Are We any Closer to the Non-operative Management of Rectal Cancer?

Adrian Tulin[1], Cornelia Nitipir[2], Iulian Slavu[3], Vlad Braga[3], Daniela Mihaila[1], Lucian Alecu[1]
[1]General Surgery Clinic, Prof. Dr."Agrippa Ionescu" Emergency Clinical Hospital, Bucharest, Romania
[2]Emergency Clinical Hospital, Elias, Bucharest, Romania
[3]General Surgery Clinic, Emergency Clinical Hospital "Floreasca", Bucharest, Romania

Abstract
Introduction: Over time, the management of rectal cancer has undoubtedly evolved with the use of neoadjuvant radiochemotherapy.
Material and method: The P.I.C.O.S guidelines were used to structure the questions and the research topic as to attain clinical validity. The results of the research were filtered in accordance with the PRISMA checklist.
Results: We identified 42 papers. After screening 27 papers were used to complete the analysis.
Discussion: There is an increased interest towards the non-operative management of rectal cancer, as up to 25% of patients with preoperative radiochemotherapy have demonstrated complete pathological response (absence of tumor cells on the operative specimens). This information leads to the tantalizing idea that in some cases, surgery can be avoided. Unfortunately, there is a lack of quality data to support this view. Due to increased interest in this subject, an international database in which patients with w&w therapy can be enrolled and monitored. Up to now, the database contains over 900 patients. Also, quality prospective trials are emerging.
Conclusion: Even with all these recent efforts, the wide-use of this therapy is precluded due to the absence of a standardized evaluation of these patients in the follow-up period.
Key words: non-operative treatment, rectal cancer, watch and wait