

Cancer

PROGRAMS

QUALITY PROGRAMS
of the AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF SURGEONS



AJCC

American Joint Committee on Cancer

Validating science. Improving patient care.

Lesson 25

M Category



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

*Inspiring Quality:
Highest Standards, Better Outcomes*

100+ years

pM1 Meets Pathological Stage Criteria

- Metastasis confirmed microscopically (pM1)
 - Criteria for pathological classification is satisfied
 - Without surgical resection of primary tumor
 - Does not require resection of metastatic tumor
 - Assign pathological stage using pM1

- Diagnostic biopsy proven distant metastasis is pM1
 - Grouped as both clinical and pathological stage IV
 - Regardless of “c” or “p” status of T and N
 - Examples
 - cT1 cN1 pM1 clinical stage IV
 - cT1 cN1 pM1 pathological stage IV
 - pT1 pN1 pM1 pathological stage IV

Two Sites for M Subcategory

- M subcategory distinguishes between
 - One site, e.g. pM1a
 - Two or more sites, more than one site, e.g. pM1b
- Only **one** site must be microscopically proven for pM1b
 - Two metastatic sites criteria to assign pM1b subcategory
 - Do **NOT** need microscopic evidence of both sites to assign
 - Example
 - Biopsy of liver and bone scan both indicating metastatic disease
 - Assign pM1b subcategory to indicate two sites involved
- Since at least one metastatic site has been tissue proven
 - Not necessary to biopsy other site
 - Already proven cancer has metastasized
 - Clarification from AJCC physician experts

No y for M Category

- M category *never* uses y prefix for postneoadjuvant therapy
 - Do **NOT** use ycM
 - Do **NOT** use ypM
 - **Use** cM0, cM1, or pM1
- M category status defined *prior* to therapy
 - Never changes from original designation
 - Always use M category from clinical stage
 - Reflects patient's true prognosis and risk of recurrence/progression
 - Example
 - Clinical stage: cT3 cN2 cM1
 - Posttherapy Pathological stage: ypT1 ypN0 cM1 *regardless* of current M status

Blank Only – No X for M Category

- Blank needed, X **NOT** used
 - Accommodate variability in cancer behavior and type of workup
 - Information must be known, physician can make judgment call, X is **not** valid
- Blank – physician staging
 - Patient did not meet staging criteria
 - No diagnostic workup for clinical stage
 - Example: emergency surgery for bowel obstruction finds colon ca
 - No surgical resection for pathological stage
- Blank – registry data fields
 - Must use blank if information is not known
 - Registrar cannot assign X
 - X is never valid for M



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Thank You