

Should we consider all AJCC stage IIIB BCa equal? The impact of local

T staging in N2 and N3 patients after radical cystectomy

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Abstract number:
MP55-15



Introduction

Current AJCC staging defines stage IIIB disease in bladder cancer (BCa) as patients with pN2 or pN3 disease, regardless of local staging (T stage). However, long term survival in this cohort of patients is not invariably unfavorable. We tested the prognostic impact of T stage in AJCC Stage IIIB BCa in patients treated with radical cystectomy (RC).

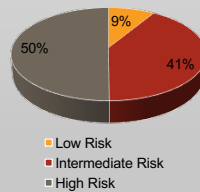
Materials & Methods

We identified a total of 499 patients with pathological N2 or N3 disease at RC, treated at a single tertiary care center. Descriptive statistics showed the differences in clinical features of patients included in the study. Kaplan-Meier plots described the recurrence and survival figures of the study population after stratification according to local T stage (pT0-T2 vs. pT3 vs. pT4a) and according to pN2 and pN3 disease. A novel risk stratification was defined according to different combination of T and N stages and was tested in Kaplan-Meier as well as after univariable and multivariable Cox regression analyses assessing disease recurrence and cancer-specific mortality after RC.

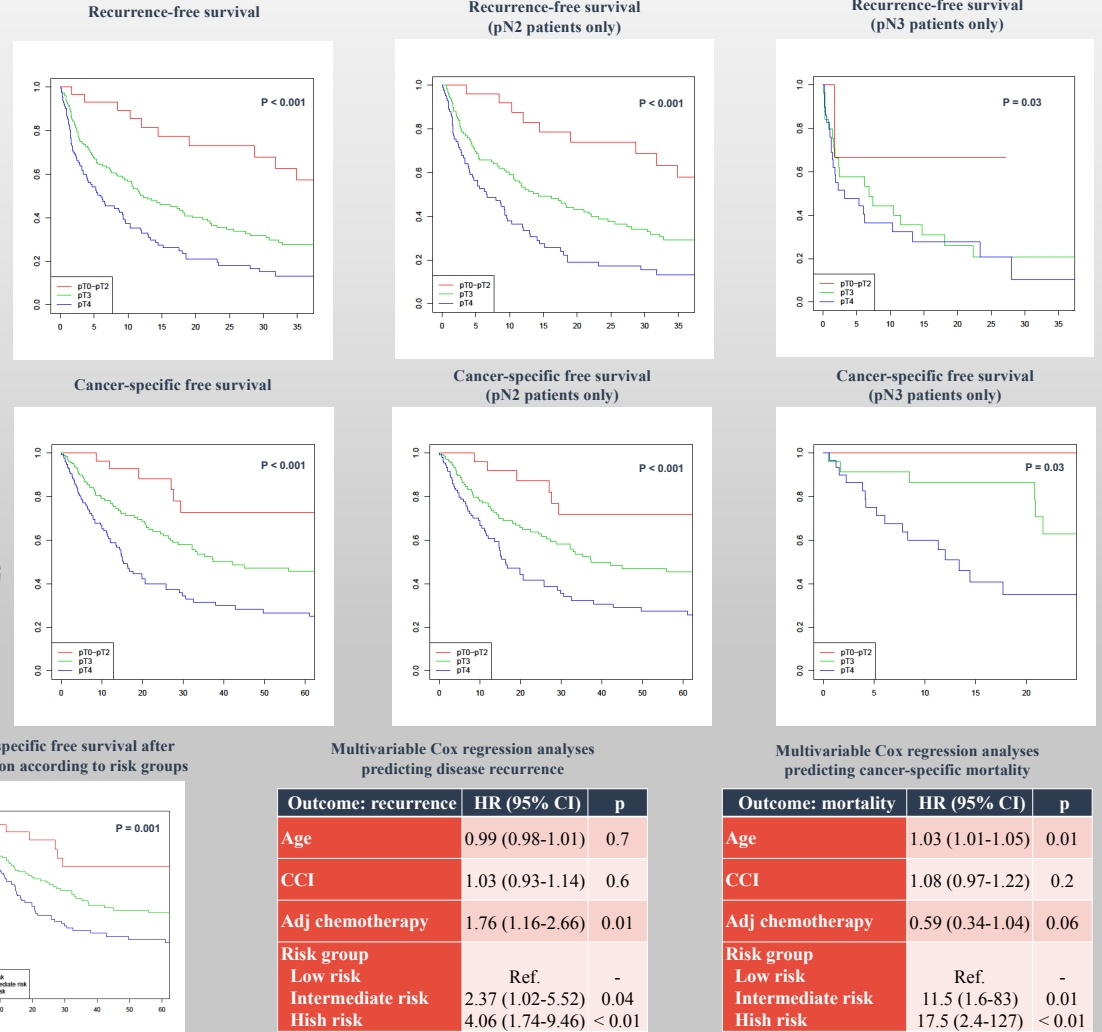
General characteristics of all 499 pts

Age	
Median	69.2
IQR	62.5-76.1
Charlson Comorbidity Index	
Median	1
IQR	0-2
Removed Lymph nodes	
Median	20
IQR	14-28
Urinary diversion	
Neobladder	57 (11.4)
Ileal conduit	161 (23.3)
Ureteroenterostomy	183 (36.7)
Pathological stage	
pT0-pT2	50 (10.0)
pT3	236 (47.3)
pT4a	213 (42.7)
Nodal stage	
pN2	421 (84.4)
pN3	78 (15.6)
Surgical technique	
Open	475 (95.2)
Laparoscopic	2 (0.4)
Robotic	8 (1.6)

RISK STRATIFICATION	
Low risk	pT0-pT2 and pN2
Intermediate risk	pT3 and pN2
High risk	pT4 anyN anyT pN3



Results



Conclusions

Our results should suggest that a substaging of AJCC stage IIIB treated with RC, accounting for local tumor staging offers a higher discrimination on both recurrence and survival. In light of our results, a re-stratification of stage IIIB BCa should be advocated