thus created and then regularly updated. In the following years were gathered. A central database of the Screening Registry was the electronic form) from all cytological laboratories in the region regularly attend the opportunistic screening. All smear reports (in nearly 50% participation rate in the group of women who do not 28,804 invitations were sent. Personal invitations have resulted in to pre-arranged gynaecologic exams. In the period 1998–2001, women from the target population were regularly made and invited constructed. From the Central Population Register, samples of has been practised since then on a yearly basis and recommended to women by gynaecologic community and paid by the health insurance. According to the data of the Cancer Registry of Slovenia, the crude incidence rate of invasive cervical cancer increased from 22.5/100,000 in 1950 to 34/100,000 in 1962 and then decreased to 14/100,000 in 1979, when the incidence was the lowest. Since then till 1993 there were no major changes (though nothing had changed in gynaecological recommendations) but in 1994 the incidence rate started to increase again. Furthermore, an increase of the invasive cancer incidence in the younger age groups (30-39) has been observed. In the period 1994–1998, the age specific incidence rate in the age groups 30–34 and 35–39 was nearly the same as in the period 1959–1963, at the start of the opportunistic screening. In 1996, a decision was made by the Ministry of Health and Health insurance Company to start a pilot study to gradually introduce organised cervical cancer screening programme. The pilot study was to introduce organised CC screening. The pilot started in 1998 in the central region of Slovenia. First, a uniform smear report form and skeleton of a computer database were constructed. From the Central Population Register, samples of women from the target population were regularly made and invited to pre-arranged gynaecologic exams. In the period 1998–2001, 28,804 invitations were sent. Personal invitations have resulted in nearly 50% participation rate in the group of women who do not regularly attend the opportunistic screening. All smear reports (in the electronic form) from all cytological laboratories in the region were gathered. A central database of the Screening Registry was thus created and then regularly updated. In the following years the reporting of smears from all cytological laboratories from the whole country was established, so since 2003 the register is covering the whole country and constant monitoring of the coverage and quality has been established. National guidelines for quality assurance and control of all procedures involved in cervical cancer screening and treatment of intraepithelial lesions and of cervical cancer were determined. The legal basis for the programme was also established: the contents of the database is included in the law on health statistics, the special regulation for cytopathology laboratories was published by the Ministry of Health and laboratories have been reviewed to evaluate whether they comply with these standards. With the ministry’s recommendation on preventive examinations in primary reproductive health care where screening policy was introduced, the national programme started in 2003. It has a name ZORA after Slovenian initials for organised cervical cancer screening programme. The central coordination office with the Screening Registry is at the Ljubljana Institute of Oncology. Each woman between ages 20 and 64 is to be invited to perform a preventive gynaecological examination together with PAP smear once in every three years (after two negative smears) – either by her “personal” gynaecologist with whom she has already been registered or from the Screening Centre in case she has not been registered yet. Women aged 65 to 74 years are not invited but are offered screening when they attend gynaecologist for other reasons.

In Slovenia, opportunistic screening was introduced in regular gynaecological practice in 1960, but in some regions already in 1955 and 1956. A preventive gynaecological exam (smear included) has been practised since then on a yearly basis and recommended to women by gynaecologic community and paid by the health insurance. According to the data of the Cancer Registry of Slovenia, the crude incidence rate of invasive cervical cancer increased from 22.5/100,000 in 1950 to 34/100,000 in 1962 and then decreased to 14/100,000 in 1979, when the incidence was the lowest. Since then till 1993 there were no major changes (though nothing had changed in gynaecological recommendations) but in 1994 the incidence rate started to increase again. Furthermore, an increase of the invasive cancer incidence in the younger age groups (30-39) has been observed. In the period 1994–1998, the age specific incidence rate in the age groups 30–34 and 35–39 was nearly the same as in the period 1959–1963, at the start of the opportunistic screening. In 1996, a decision was made by the Ministry of Health and Health insurance Company to start a pilot study to gradually introduce organised CC screening. The pilot started in 1998 in the central region of Slovenia. First, a uniform smear report form and skeleton of a computer database were constructed. From the Central Population Register, samples of women from the target population were regularly made and invited to pre-arranged gynaecologic exams. In the period 1998–2001, 28,804 invitations were sent. Personal invitations have resulted in nearly 50% participation rate in the group of women who do not regularly attend the opportunistic screening. All smear reports (in the electronic form) from all cytological laboratories in the region were gathered. A central database of the Screening Registry was thus created and then regularly updated. In the following years where laboratory diagnostics of papillomaviruses is performed using hybridization test for those indications recommended by the professional association.

The solution is to intensively search for the „call-recall“ system operation – in order to ensure the invitation system for preventive check-ups, screening evaluation system, data flow and collection and standardization of all examinations related to the preventive check. The best-fit seems to establish the national reference center for cervix cancer screening. The result of this outlined effort should be the significant decrease of steady high incidence of this disease in the Slovak Republic (app. 20/100,000 woman per year).

CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING IN SLOVENIA

Maja Primic Žakelj
Epidemiology and Cancer Registry, Institute of Oncology, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Address for correspondence: M. Žakelj, Institute of Oncology Ljubljana, Epidemiology and Cancer Registry, Zaloška 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia. E-mail: mzakelj@onko-i.si

Key words: screening, cervical, cancer, organized, opportunistic
of screening smears were less adequate or inadequate and in 7.2% any cell abnormality has been found. In Cervical Pathology Registry 8,620 histological reports have been registered, more than half of them were from diagnostic biopsies. In 2006, 153 new cervical cancer patients have been registered. The linkage of their data with the Screening registry enables us to review their screening history; nearly three quarter of these patients did not attend for regular screening. According to the data from the Cancer Registry of Slovenia, the incidence rate of cervical cancer started to decrease, especially in the age group 35 to 49 years. According to the EUROCARE-4 study, the age-standardized 5-year relative survival rate in patients with cervical cancer was 65.2% (60.8–69.9) in Slovenia, while EUROCARE-4 average was 60.4% (57.7–63.2).

Even though the goal of 70% of women having at least one smear in the last three years has already been achieved in Slovenia and the incidence rate started to decrease, there is still a lot of room for improvement of our programme in all critical points.

LESS RADICAL FERTILITY SPARING SURGERY THAN RADICAL TRACHELECTOMY IN EARLY CERVICAL CANCER

Marek Pluta¹, Lukáš Rob¹, Martin Charvát¹, Helena Robová¹, Pavel Strnad¹, Martin Hrehorčák¹, Michael J. Halaška³, Petr Škapa²

¹Division of Gynecologic Oncology, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Charles University Prague, 2nd Medical Faculty, Prague, Czech Republic
²Department of Pathological Anatomy and Molecular Medicine, Charles University Prague, 2nd Medical Faculty, Prague, Czech Republic
³Division of Gynecologic Oncology, Obstetrics and Gynecology Department, University Hospital Motol, 2nd Medical Faculty, Charles University Prague, Czech Republic

Address for correspondence: M. Pluta, University Hospital Motol, 2nd Medical Faculty, Charles University, V úvalu 84, 150 18 Prague 5, Czech Republic. E-mail: marek.pluta@lfmotol.cuni.cz

Summary

Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine the feasibility and safety of a novel and less radical fertility preserving surgery; laparoscopic lymphadenectomy with sentinel lymph node identification (SLNI) followed by large cone or simple trachelectomy. Obstetrical and oncological outcomes were evaluated.

Material and Methods: Forty patients (3-IA1, 10-IA2, 27-IB1), selected on the basis of favourable cervical tumour characteristics and the desire to maintain fertility underwent laparoscopic SLNI, frozen section (FS) and a complete pelvic lymphadenectomy as the first step of treatment. All of the nodes were submitted for microscopic evaluation (sentinel nodes for ultramicrostaging). After a seven-day interval, large cone or simple vaginal trachelectomy was performed in patients with negative nodes.

Results: Finally we saved fertility in 32 women. The average of the sentinel nodes per side was 1.50 and the average of the total nodes was 27.8. Six FS were positive (15.0%). In these cases Wertheim radical hysterectomy type III was immediately performed. There were no false negative SLN results. Median follow-up was 46 months (12–102). One central recurrence (isthmic part of the uterus) was observed 14 months after surgery. This patient was treated with radical chemoradiotherapy and there was no evidence of the disease 36 months after treatment. One patient in follow up had HG SIL/HPV HR positive – patient decided for hysterectomy. 24 women planned pregnancy, we had 23 pregnancies in 17 women; we had 12 children (1 in 24 weeks, 1 in 34 weeks, 1 in 36 weeks and 9 between 37 to 39 weeks).

Conclusions: Lymphatic mapping and SLNI improves safety in this fertility sparing surgery. Large cone or simple trachelectomy combined with laparoscopic pelvic lymphadenectomy can be a feasible method with a high successful pregnancy rate.

Key words: simple trachelectomy, sentinel lymph node, cervical cancer, fertility sparing surgery

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