

A case of composite lymphoma of diffuse large B cell lymphoma and marginal zone lymphoma

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Composite lymphoma is a rare disease characterized by two or more discrete types of lymphoma in the same tissue. Here we report a case of composite lymphoma comprised of diffuse large B cell lymphoma (DLBCL) combined with marginal zone lymphoma (MZL). A 79-year-old woman visited our hospital with one-month history of neck swelling. Computed tomography (CT) of the neck revealed multiple lymph node (LN) enlargement and palatine tonsillar hypertrophy on both sides (Figure A). Excisional biopsy of the right palatine tonsil was performed, and the patient was diagnosed with MZL. After admission for systemic evaluation, the patient complained of a rapid increase in the size of the mass in the left neck. Neck CT was performed again, which showed a significant increase in the size of LNs in the left neck but no change in the size of LNs in other sites (Figure B). Positron emission tomography/CT scan showed hypermetabolic lesions in both cervical LNs, and bilateral palatine and lingual tonsils (Figure C). Excisional biopsy of the left neck LN was performed, and pathological examination of the surgical specimen demonstrated scattered large B cells with CD20 positivity and prominent Ki-67 staining, in the background of smaller monotonous lymphoid cells with less Ki-67 positivity, consistent with DLBCL in the background of MZL (Figure D). The patient was treated with rituximab, cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, vincristine, and prednisolone (R-CHOP) and she achieved partial metabolic response in the interim response assessment after 3 cycles of chemotherapy. Accurate pathological diagnosis of lymphoma is essential for appropriate treatment. This case showed an unusual case of composite lymphoma composed of DLBCL in the background of MZL. The patient went through two separate excisional biopsies resulting in two different diagnoses, which signifies the possibility of co-existence of different types of lymphoma in separate anatomical sites in one patient.

