

## Comparison of efficacy of resection and RFA in resectable hepatocellular carcinoma in the elderly

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**Background/Aims:** For resectable hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) less than 3 cm in size, radiofrequency ablation (RFA) shows a therapeutic effect comparable to that of surgery. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the therapeutic effects of RFA and resection would be similar in HCC less than 3 cm in the elderly aged 65 years or older in Korea.

**Methods:** We used the National Health Insurance Service claims data linked with liver cancer stage data of the Central Cancer Registry of National Cancer Center (2011-2016) and the death data of the National Statistical Office. Of the 9213 registrants, we analyzed 141 patients who underwent surgery and 225 patients who underwent RFA at the age of 65 years or older. A 1:1 propensity score (PS) matching was performed between the surgery and the RFA group.

**Results:** The RFA group had more women than the surgery group (34.7% vs. 24.8%) and the average age was higher. (70 vs. 68 years). The surgery group had a higher proportion of hepatitis B patients (48.2% vs. 32.4%) and a lower proportion of hepatitis C patients (17.0% vs. 26.2%) than the RFA group. In addition, performance status was lower in the surgery group, and liver function was better than that of the RFA group. The surgery group had a larger tumor diameter than the RFA group (2.1 cm vs. 1.7 cm), and the proportion of stage II rate was higher (62.4% vs. 33.8%). After PS matching, mortality in the RFA group was not significantly different compared to the resection group (HR 1.33, 95% CI 0.86-2.06,  $p=0.19$ )

**Conclusions:** In resectable HCC in patients aged 65 years or older, RFA shows a therapeutic effect comparable to surgery.

Figure 1

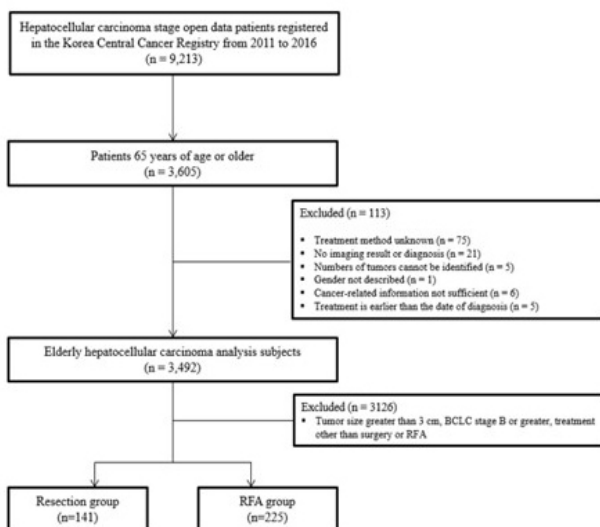


Figure 2A

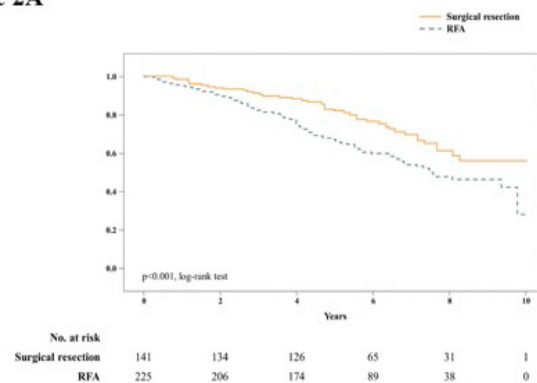


Figure 2B

