

Trial of Adjuvant Limb Perfusion in Malignant Melanoma

From Professor Westbury

Sir

I am Chairman of a Working Party of the Medical Research Council investigating the possible benefit of adjuvant isolated limb perfusion in the management of invasive melanoma of the lower limb. There is, as you know, an increasing risk of both loco-regional failure and distant metastases with increasing thickness of the primary lesion and there is evidence, largely uncontrolled, that perfusion at the time of surgery reduces the risk of both forms of metastasis.

The study has been in progress for a year and we are disappointed by the slow rate of accrual which if not improved will lead to the abandonment of the trial. A major source of possible patients for referral of course comes from Plastic Surgical Units. Individual members of the Working Party who are situated in various parts of the United Kingdom have not had much luck with personal contacts. I wondered therefore whether you would consider it appropriate to help publicise the trial. A list of the Perfusion Units involved is attached.

Yours faithfully

G. Westbury

Professor of Surgery,
The Royal Marsden Hospital,
Fulham Road,
London, SW3 6JJ.

Editor's note

This randomised, controlled trial involves patients who have had a Stage 1 melanoma of the lower limb excised, thicker than 1.7 mm. The treated group receive hyperthermic perfusion with melphalan.

This is a very important multicentre study which offers

real hope of improving the prognosis for a group of patients with malignant melanoma. It would be tragic if it were to founder for lack of patients and plastic surgeons should give serious consideration to participating in it. Protocols for the study are available from the Perfusion Units involved and the nearest Unit should be contacted by anyone interested.

Membership of Working Party

Statistician, Medical Research Council Centre, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 2QH.
Telephone: (0223) 245133.

Professor L. E. Hughes, Professor of Surgery, Welsh National School of Medicine, Heath Park, Cardiff, CF4 4XN.

Telephone: Cardiff 755944.

Alan J. McKay, Consultant General and Vascular Surgeon, Gartnavel General Hospital, 1053 Great Western Road, Glasgow G12 0YN.

Telephone: 041-334 8122. Ext. 463.

Mr R. D. Rosin, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY.

Telephone: 01-262-1280.

Mr Christopher Russell, The Middlesex Hospital, Mortimer Street, London W1.

Telephone: 01-636-8333.

Mr J. Meirion Thomas, Consultant Surgeon, Westminster Hospital, Dean Ryle Street, Horseferry Road, London W1.

Telephone: 01-828-9811.

Mr P. C. Weaver, St Mary's Hospital, Milton Road, Portsmouth PO3 6AD.

Telephone: Portsmouth 822331.

Mr S. J. Leinster, Royal Liverpool Hospital, Prescot Street, Liverpool L7 8XP.

Telephone: 051-709-0141. Ext. 2354

Professor G. Westbury, (Chairman), Royal Marsden Hospital, Fulham Road, London SW3 6JJ.

Telephone: 01-352-8171. Ext. 250.