

Case Report: Delays and Routes to Diagnosing Thyroid Metastases from Lung Carcinoid Tumors [†]

Radu Serban Matache ^{1,2}, Mircea Munteanu ³, Roxana Maria Munteanu ^{1,4,*}

¹ Department of Thoracic Surgery, "Marius Nasta" National Institute of Pneumology, Bucharest, Romania

² Department of Thoracic Surgery, "Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest, Romania

³ Hematology Department, Clinical Hospital Colentina, Bucharest, Romania

⁴ Department of Surgery, Bucharest Rahova Prison Hospital, Bucharest, Romania

* Correspondence: brincoveanu_roxana@yahoo.com (R.M.M.);

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Abstract: Neuroendocrine tumors showing cytological and histological features similar to a lung carcinoid can be misleading. We present a case that we think will improve the diagnosis and treatment of this type of tumor. A 66-year old female with a medical history of over 10 years of total thyroidectomy for thyroid carcinoma, a follicular variant, was admitted to our hospital with dry cough, fatigue, and weight loss of approximately 10kg over the last 3 months. Thoracic computed tomography showed several well-defined, round nodules in both lungs. A wedge resection with excision of a 3 cm nodule was performed, and the pathological exam revealed a typical pulmonary carcinoid. The diagnosis was confirmed by immunohistochemistry, but tumor markers were inconclusive. After approximately 3 months, additional immunohistochemistry lab work was performed and resulted that the specimen was a lung metastasis of a thyroid papillary carcinoma. Physicians must remain alert to the potential of medical error due to diagnostic difficulties of neuroendocrine tumors. Although rare, thyroid metastatic disease can present itself as carcinoid tumors.

Keywords: neuroendocrine tumors; thyroid metastases; carcinoid tumors.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.