INFLUENCE OF NEW CONTRAST AGENT ON CT BASED RADIOTHERAPY TREATMENT PLANNING

Institute of oncology Vojvodina, Clinic of radiotherapy, Sremska Kamenica, Serbia

B. Petrović, L. Rutonjski, V. Starovlah, M. Teodorović, M. Baucal, O. Čudić, B. Basarić, G. Djoric

Purpose/Objective
The patient is often given a contrast agent, to improve visibility of an organ for contouring purposes. The contrast agent is given by nurses or RTTs, and must reflect the density of an organ, but also allow better visualisation. This particular study was done to determine the appropriate concentration of a new contrast agent which was used in the same manner as the previously used type. Due to high atomic number of a contrast agent, large value of a CT number is obtained, if unappropriate concentration is used. High HU value in TPS correlates to the high density of tissue, which certainly will change the treatment planning result as contrast area is seen by TPS as high density material.

Materials/Methods
The newly purchased contrast agent was used to mark vagina in gynecological patients, according to the prescription for an old type of contrast agent. The first patient scanned on CT gave glowing white area instead of vagina, after which the investigation and study were done. The cylindrical phantom with inserts was CT scanned and analyzed. The inserts were filled with contrast agent of different concentrations. The evaluation was done, and new prescription was issued for the use of new contrast agent.

Results
The concentrations od 100%, 50%, 25%, 12.5%, 6.25%, 5%, 2.5%, 1.25%, 0.65%, and 0.325% were made and CT scanned. The HU values accordingly were obtained: 3071 HU, 3071 HU, 1822 HU, 117 HU, 668 HU, 440 HU, 356 HU, 291 HU, 123 HU and 56 HU. The prescription given for the new contrast was set to 1.25%, that is 12.5 ml to 1 l of water. The prescription for previous contrast agent was 25 ml to 1 l of water.

It was concluded that the high concentration of contrast agent in the treatment planning system, may influence up to 6% on the time of irradiation, depending on the concentration of an agent. High concentration of the agent causes underestimation of a dose, and consequitively overirradiation of a patient.

Conclusion
Concentration of a contrast agent must be a low as possible, so that its influence on treatment planning result is minimized, but also visibility enhanced. The upper limit in HU units, is locally set to be less than 350 HU, as this does not change significantly the result of treatment planning.

In case patient is scanned with higher concentration, the area must be manually adjusted in the TPS.