

EXAMINATION OF PATIENT DELAY AND MEDICAL DELAY AMONG PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH LUNG CANCER

Király Z¹, Boncz I², Endrei D², Kívés Z³

¹Veszprém County Lung Medical Institute, Farkasgyepű, Hungary,

²University of Pécs, Pécs, Hungary,

³University of Pécs, PÉCS, BA, Hungary¹.

OBJECTIVES

Lung cancer is also a serious public health problem worldwide in terms of morbidity and mortality. The aim of our research was to determine patient delay and medical delay among patients diagnosed with lung cancer.

METHODS

The retrospective study was carried out at the Veszprém County Lung Medical Institute, in Hungary between 01.01.2020-31.12.2020 among patients with primary lung cancer (n=171). We performed medical record analysis: age, gender, smoking habits, symptoms, patient delay (the time from the first symptom to the first medical visit), diagnostic tests, medical delay (the time from the first visit to diagnosis and the time from diagnosis to treatment), histological result and cancer stage. In addition to the descriptive statistical analysis χ^2 -test, ANOVA and Independent samples t-test were applied (p<0.05) with SPSS software.

RESULTS

The mean age was 66.9±8.2 years, 109 men and 62 women. Main symptoms were cough (38.46%), haemoptysis (16.9%), asphyxia (23.8%) and weight-loss (31.5%). The mean of patient delay was 37.3±49.9 days. Including complainant cases, the average delay was 49.09 days. The delay was significantly (p=0.020) longer in men (39.64 days) than in women (33.24 days). The diagnostic delay was 48.6±40.4 days. In case of patient visiting GP for the first time, the delay was 55.15, in case of dispensary was 57.76 days, and emergency ward was 32.95 days. The majority of patients (33.9%) were at stage IV B and stage IV A (25.1%) diagnosis. The therapeutic delay was 17.6±19 days, the mean was 13.87 days for systemic treatment, 40.35 days for operable evenings (31 subjects), and 21 days for radiotherapy (20 subjects).

CONCLUSIONS

The time period when patients visit the doctor with a complaint, it is shorter than the time required to make a diagnosis and start therapy. This difference may be due to significant health reorganization because of the pandemic.

Symptoms	n	%
cough	50	38.46
haemoptysis	22	16.9
asphyxia	31	23.8
weight loss	41	31.5
other	64	49.2

Table 1.
The main symptoms (n=171)

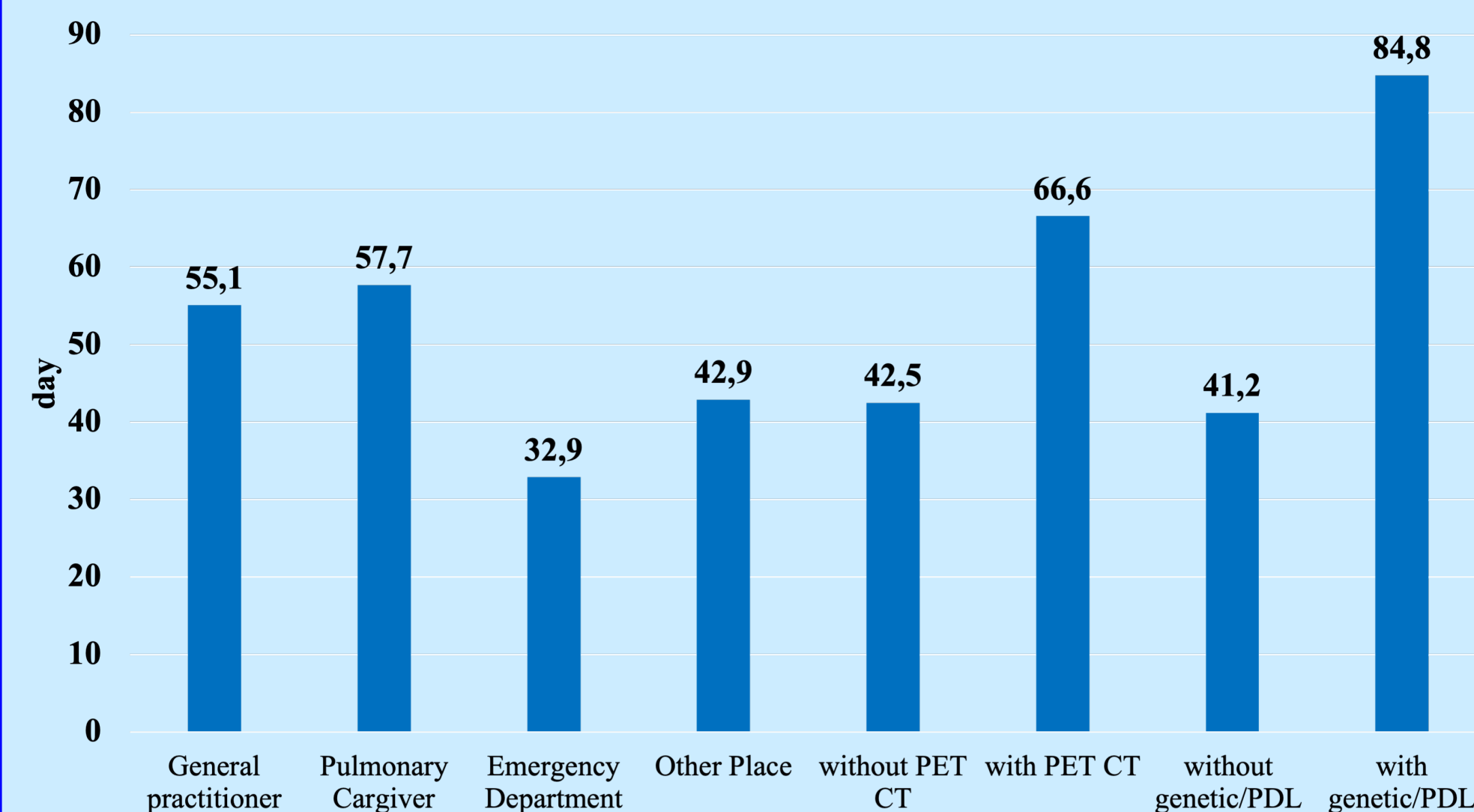


Figure 2.
Mean of diagnostic delay (time between first care and diagnostic test) according to the method of a diagnostic test (n=171)

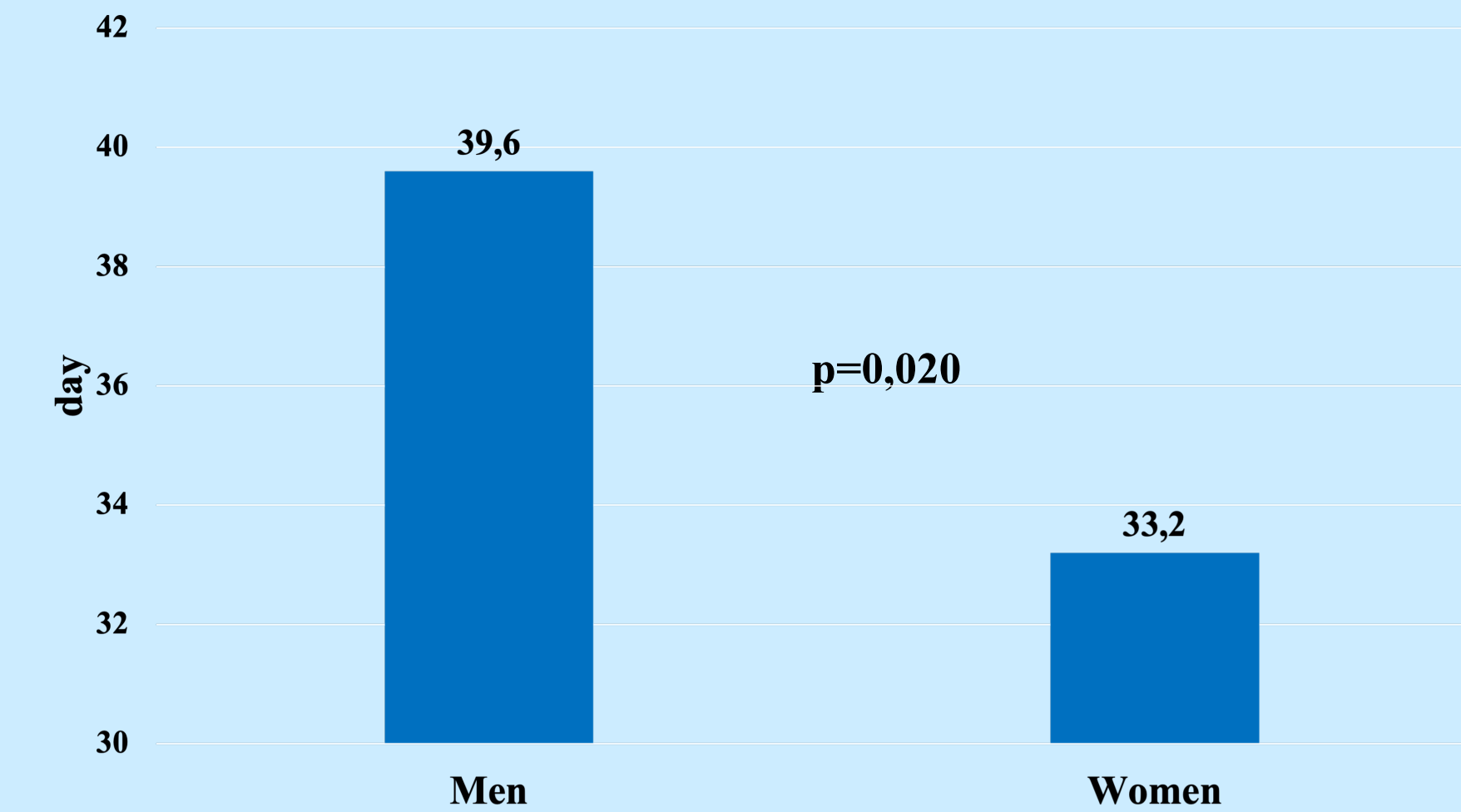


Figure 1.
Patient delay (time from initiation of symptoms to first doctor-patient encounter) by gender (n=171)

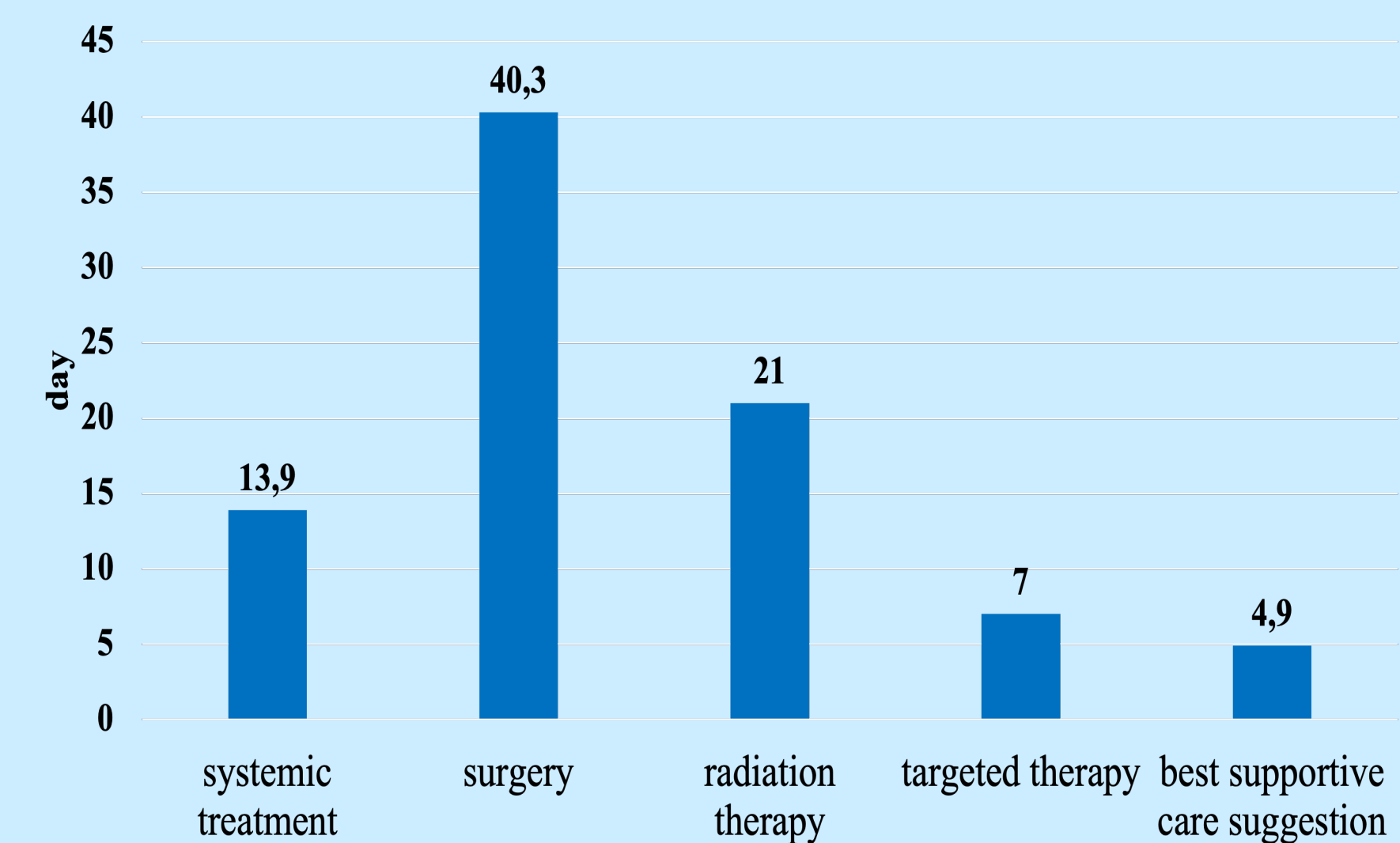


Figure 3.
Mean of therapeutic delay by type of treatment (time between diagnosis and start of treatment) (n=171)

ISPOR 2022

May 15-18, 2022

Washington, DC, USA Area and Virtual



PÉCSI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

Funding:

The research was financed by the Thematic Excellence Program 2021 Health Sub-programme of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology in Hungary, within the framework of the EGA-10 project of the University of Pécs.

Corresponding author:

Dr. Zsuzsanna KIVÉS, MSc, PhD
University of Pécs, Faculty of Health Sciences, Hungary
Institute for Health Insurance
E-mail: zsuzsa.kives@etk.pte.hu

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