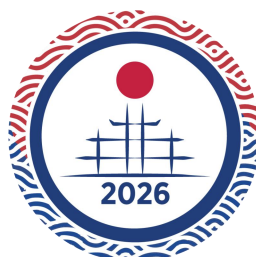




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INTRODUCTION

The prognosis of limited-stage small cell lung cancer (LS-SCLC) varies considerably among patients. This study aimed to identify independent prognostic factors and develop a risk score model to support clinical outcome prediction.

METHODS

Design:
This single-center retrospective cohort study included 419 patients diagnosed with LS-SCLC at the Fourth Hospital of Hebei Medical University between January 2018 and June 2025. Clinicopathological characteristics, treatment details, and survival data were collected. Independent prognostic factors were identified using Cox regression, and a risk score model was developed based on the multivariable analysis. The primary endpoint was overall survival (OS). Model performance was evaluated using the concordance index (C-index) and time-dependent area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUC).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Actionable Take Away Message

- Key determinants of survival included treatment-related factors (surgery, ICIs, PCI, TRT) and clinicopathological factors (age, Ki-67, mediastinal nodal status).

Future Direction for Research

- The proposed model demonstrated moderate to good discrimination for short- to medium-term survival prediction, offering a potential tool to inform prognostic assessment and individualized treatment decisions in LS-SCLC.

REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• Use QR code to save space and to link to more extensive lists or related works.



RESULTS

The median follow-up duration was 38.6 months, and the median OS (mOS) for the entire cohort was 56.2 months (95% CI: 42.6–NR). Multivariable Cox regression analysis revealed that age ≥ 65 years (HR = 1.42, 95% CI: 1.02–1.99, $P = 0.037$), absence of surgery (HR = 1.96, 95% CI: 1.29–2.96, $P = 0.001$), absence of immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICIs) (HR = 2.25, 95% CI: 1.27–3.54, $P = 0.004$), absence of prophylactic cranial irradiation (PCI) (HR = 1.69, 95% CI: 1.13–2.52, $P = 0.010$), and Ki-67 expression $\geq 70\%$ (HR = 2.33, 95% CI: 1.35–4.02, $P = 0.002$) were independently associated with worse OS (all $P < 0.05$). Absence of thoracic radiotherapy (TRT) (HR = 3.57, 95% CI: 2.03–6.26, $P < 0.001$) and presence of mediastinal lymphadenopathy on initial imaging (HR = 3.54, 95% CI: 2.06–6.08, $P < 0.001$) were independently associated with shorter early OS (≤ 18 months) (both $P < 0.001$). The risk score model developed from these factors achieved a C-index of 0.695. Time-dependent ROC analysis yielded AUC values of 0.750, 0.721, 0.654, 0.667, and 0.662 for 12-, 24-, 36-, 48-, and 60-month OS, respectively.

Variable	Univariable analysis		Multivariable analysis	
	HR (95% CI)	P value	HR (95% CI)	P value
Sex (female vs male)	0.84(0.59-1.20)	0.338		
Age (≥ 65 years vs < 65 years)	1.42(1.03-1.97)	0.034	1.42(1.02-1.99)	0.037
ECOG performance status (1-2 vs 0)	1.00(0.72-1.39)	0.985	0.78(0.47-1.60)	0.094
Smoking status (smoker vs non-smoker)	1.48(1.06-2.05)	0.021		
Tumor location (right lung vs left lung)	0.86(0.63-1.19)	0.373		
Radiologic stage (stage II vs stage I)	1.07(0.70-1.62)	0.759		
Radiologic stage (stage III vs stage I), 0-18 months	3.12(1.75-5.55)	< 0.001		
Radiologic stage (stage III vs stage I), > 18 months	1.20(0.69-2.08)	0.520		
Tumor type (central vs peripheral)	1.24(0.90-1.72)	0.185	1.37(0.97-1.93)	0.072
Surgery (no vs yes)	1.31(0.94-1.82)	0.113	1.96(1.29-2.96)	0.001
ICIs (no vs yes)	2.11(1.27-3.49)	0.004	2.25(1.35-3.75)	0.002
TRT (no vs yes), 0-18 months	2.34(1.40-3.92)	0.001	3.57(2.03-6.26)	< 0.001
TRT (no vs yes), > 18 months	1.15(0.74-1.80)	0.530	1.45(0.89-2.36)	0.140
PCI (no vs yes)	1.49(1.02-2.18)	0.038	1.69(1.13-2.52)	0.010
Tumor diameter (≥ 5 cm vs < 5 cm)	1.46(1.00-2.13)	0.050	1.47(0.92-2.36)	0.109
Radiologic hilar lymph-node enlargement (yes vs no), 0-18 months	1.68(0.93-2.96)	0.073		
Radiologic hilar lymph-node enlargement (yes vs no), > 18 months	0.97(0.64-1.47)	0.877		
Radiologic mediastinal lymph-node enlargement (yes vs no), 0-18 months	3.75(2.21-6.34)	< 0.001	3.54(2.06-6.08)	< 0.001
Radiologic mediastinal lymph-node enlargement (yes vs no), > 18 months	1.71(0.74-1.85)	0.497	1.06(0.66-1.72)	0.799
Ki-67 ($\geq 70\%$ vs $< 70\%$)	2.22(1.32-3.73)	0.003	2.33(1.35-4.02)	0.002
ALB (< 35 g/L vs ≥ 35 g/L)	1.41(0.45-4.44)	0.555		
PLT (< 300 vs $\geq 300 \times 10^9/L$), 0-18 months	1.29(0.73-2.31)	0.375		
PLT (< 300 vs $\geq 300 \times 10^9/L$), > 18 months	0.69(0.40-1.71)	0.168		
LDH (≥ 250 U/L vs < 250 U/L)	1.21(0.78-1.86)	0.391		
NLR (> 6 vs ≤ 6)	0.88(0.46-1.67)	0.694		

