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[Gastric Cancer](#)

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**Preoperative Computed Tomography in Gastric Cancer: Does It Work?**

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**Background and Purpose:** Although multiple studies testing the accuracy of computed tomography (CT) scanning in the preoperative staging of patients with gastric adenocarcinoma have been carried out, the results are controversial. Some authors claim that CT is an accurate method to preoperatively stage gastric cancer, whereas others disagree. Because of this discrepancy, we retrospectively reviewed preoperative CT findings and compared them with histopathologic results in patients with gastric adenocarcinoma.

**Patients and Methods:** Seventy-two patients diagnosed with gastric cancer who had undergone preoperative staging by spiral CT and potentially curative surgery were included. The tumor size, gastric wall thickening, presence of lymphadenopathy, adjacent organ invasion, and location of the gastric mass were recorded. Early tumors (T1 and T2) and more advanced tumors (T3 and T4) were grouped together. CT staging was correlated with final histopathologic stage (TNM). The global results were expressed as sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value (PPV), and negative predictive value (NPV).

**Results:** Among 72 patients included, 55 were males and median age was 67 years (range, 33-91 years). CT correctly identified the location of the tumor in 56 patients (53% antropyloic, 18% subcardial). Median time from CT scan to surgery was 14 days (range, 2-49 days). CT scan detected T1/T2 and T3/T4 tumors with sensitivity of 70% and 61%, respectively; and of lymph node involvement with sensitivity of 49%. Forty-seven percent (47%) of patients were overstaged and 75% were understaged, with specificity of 53%. Nine patients had colon-mesocolon (n = 5) and pancreatic (n = 4) invasion, with a sensitivity of 44% and specificity of 96%.

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**Conclusion:** Spiral CT is not an accurate method in predicting preoperative stage in gastric cancer patients, and should therefore be used in conjunction with other staging procedures in clinical practice.