Recent Advances in Radiology for the Diagnosis of Gastric Carcinoma

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Introduction

Radiographic diagnosis of gastric carcinoma [1] was first introduced in the 1960s in Japan, which led the world in the early diagnosis of gastric carcinoma by double-contrast method using film-screen systems (FSS) [2,3]. Qualitative diagnostics, including diagnosis of the depth of tumor invasion, were explored thoroughly in the 1970s, and it could be claimed that the radiographic diagnosis of gastric carcinoma was completely established by the beginning of the 1980s [4]. Gastric radiography has now become a standard examination modality in the screening and preoperative staging of gastric carcinoma and is widely used across the globe. The mortality rate from gastric carcinoma is especially high in Japan, and gastric radiography has made a substantial contribution to the detection of gastric carcinoma in mass screening. With recent advances in endoscopic techniques, the primary role in the diagnosis of gastric carcinoma, including its early diagnosis, has been inherited by endoscopy, but it is also a fact that radiography is still widely used in clinical diagnosis in screening and preoperative staging [5]. The demand for computerization of medical information grew in the 1980s, and against a background of advances in image engineering, the digitalization of medical images has proceeded apace [6,7]. In gastric radiography, too, digitalization via digital radiography (DR) using high-resolution charge-coupled device (CCD) cameras (CCD-DR) has been established and disseminated rapidly, and we also have reported its usefulness in the diagnosis of gastric carcinoma [8]. Meanwhile, a recent major development in the field of radiology has been the emergence of multidetector row computed tomography (CT) (MDCT) [9]. With the advent of MDCT in the second half of the 1990s, CT has achieved increased efficiencies and improved image quality in a revolutionary scanning modality [10]. In the preoperative staging of gastric carcinoma, it is now possible to accurately evaluate local inva-
sion and small metastases, and three-dimensional (3D) MDCT imaging (MDCT gastrography) has arrived on the scene as a new diagnostic tool for primary lesions.

In this chapter, we describe the present status of radiologic diagnosis of gastric carcinoma using CCD-DR at our center, report our experience of MDCT gastrography in the preoperative staging of gastric carcinoma, and discuss the future prospects for radiographic diagnosis of gastric carcinoma using these new diagnostic techniques.

Advanced Digital Radiographic Systems for Gastric Diagnosis

In our hospital, images yielded by radiography of the gastrointestinal tract became completely digitalized with the adoption of CCD-DR (DR-2000H; Hitachi Medical, Tokyo, Japan) in 1999. At present, hard copies of diagnostic images are prepared for interpretation, but monitor-based diagnosis is yet to become a reality. Our radiographic investigations of the gastrointestinal tract use three CCD-DR systems: one C-arm type, one over-tube type, and one under-tube type. Each CCD-DR is connected by a DR network to two laser printers and an image server, and in parallel with the scanning procedure, reference images are forwarded to the hospital information system via a gateway after DICOM (digital imaging and communication in medicine) conversion at the same time as the diagnostic images are processed. After DICOM

![Diagram of Advanced digital radiography system for gastric diagnosis. Three charge-coupled device-digital radiography (CCD-DR) units are routinely used for gastric examinations in our hospital. Each unit connects with a DR network, and the images can be diagnosed on an image workstation.](image-url)