INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES: carcinoma regression is a rare, although well known, phenomenon that can be observed in different types of carcinoma such as renal cell cancer, neuroblastoma, malignant melanoma, and choriocarcinoma, tumors with a high mutation burden. Herein we report a rare case of metastatic undifferentiated carcinoma of the skin which has undergone, in a short period, into spontaneous regression after no-one treatment.

MATERIALS & METHODS: A 87 y.o female patient with no history of skin cancer referred to our department for the presence of a painful indurated plaque developed on the right side of the forehead (Fig.1). The lesion has appeared, and increased in size, in the last three months. A triple incisional biopsy was performed, and the pieces have been sent to the Dermatopathology unit of Graz (AT), to pathology of Friedrichshafen (GE) and Madrid (ES). In the month in which the histopathological diagnosis was expected, the lesion has consistently increased in size (Fig.2), a secondary lesion on the right cheek developed and one of the cervical lymph nodes has become palpable and indurated. Final stage was pT3,N2,M1. Further exams (lymph node biopsy, CT total-body) have been requested but during the next month the patient developed a total involution of the primary, secondary lesions (right cheek) and lymph-nodal metastasis (Fig.3).

RESULTS: The pathological specimens were characterized by the presence of highly anaplastic cells confined to the dermis. The Immunohistochemistry revealed the sequent profile: Epithelial Membrane Antigen+, adipophilin+, Myeloperoxidase-, panCK-, CK-AE1/3, CK5/6, CK7, CK20, CD10, S100, MelanA-, SOX10, CD30, CD68, CD20, CD34, Chromogranin A-, Ki67>70%. A diagnosis of undifferentiated carcinoma was performed. A biopsy has been repeated and the remission was confirmed also by pathological point of view. The CT-TB results made after the remission has not revealed disease neither at skin level nor at the level of any other organ.

CONCLUSION: neoplastic spontaneous regression, although unusual (less than 1 in 60,000 to 100,000 cases), is a well-known phenomenon in oncology and has several examples in literature. Everson and Cole were the first that spoke (1956) about “spontaneous regression” term with which is defined the complete disappearance of malignant diseases without any medical treatments. The cause of spontaneous regression remain unclear but previous reports in small cell lung cancer, melanoma, or other cancers have hypothesized the role of an alteration of the immune system.