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Coeliac Disease - Has the Time Come for Routine Mass Screening ? In 2002 - 2010 - 2020 ?

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Abstract

It might be clinically relevant to have a very low threshold when screening for coeliac disease. The question is how low? In countries familiar with coeliac disease, the classic pattern of severe malabsorption and cachexia, as described in textbooks, has become rare. Coeliac disease is not born in the minds of doctors diagnosing dyspepsia and/or irritable bowel syndrome, or associated auto-immune diseases, such as thyroid, diabetes mellitus type I, Sjögren's disease etc. The consequence is a delay in diagnosis, with secondary problems as long term autoimmune stimulation, osteoporosis and secondary malignancies. Enteropathy associated T-cell lymphomas are well known, but considering coeliac disease in T-cell lymphomas outside the gastrointestinal tract is not yet common sense.

Large-scale screening studies on coeliac disease have been published and suggest a prevalence of coeliac disease in USA, Europe, Middle-East and Australia of about 1:200. Coeliac disease can be classified due to all these studies as an important health problem. However nation-wide screening programmes have not started yet, which are common for phenylketonuria and other metabolic defects. Probably they will be initiated as pilot-studies in national programmes within 10 years at the age of 2, and due to the bimodal distribution in CD with a later peak in the fourth decade, at 40 years. Additional data about cohorts of certain age groups are mandatory (f.i. 40 and/or 60 years), while initial discussions begin with national health authorities.

Key words

Coeliac disease, screening - epidemiology - biopsy - associated diseases - T-cell lymphomas - thyroid disease- insulin-dependent diabetes - irritable bowel syndrome- infertility - miscarriage - liver disease - dyspepsia.

original papers

The Importance of Histopathological and Clinical Variables in Predicting the Evolution of Colon Cancer

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Abstract

It has been a consensus that prognostic factors should always be taken into account before planning treatment in colorectal cancer. Aim: A 5 year prospective study was conducted, in order to assess the importance of several histopathological and clinical prognostic variables in the prediction of evolution in colon cancer. Some of the factors included in the analysis are still subject to dispute by different authors. Methods: 46 of 53 screened patients qualified to enter the study and underwent a potentially curative resection of the tumor, followed, when necessary, by adjuvant chemotherapy. Univariate and multivariate analyses were carried out in order to identify independent prognostic indicators. The endpoint of the study was considered the recurrence of the tumor or the detection of metastases. Results: 65.2% of the patients had a good evolution during the follow up period. Multivariate survival analysis performed by Cox proportional hazard model identified 3 independent prognostic factors: Dukes stage ($p = 0.00002$), the grade of differentiation ($p = 0.0009$) and the weight loss index, representing the weight loss of the patient divided by the number of months when it was actually lost ($p = 0.02$). Age under 40 years, sex, microscopic aspect of the tumor, tumor location, anemia degree were not identified by our analysis as having prognostic importance.

Conclusion: Histopathological factors continue to be the most valuable source of information regarding the possible evolution of patients with colorectal cancer. Individual clinical symptoms or biological parameters such as erythrocyte sedi-mentation rate or hemoglobin level are of little or no prognostic value. More research is required relating to the impact of a performance status index (which could include also weight loss index) as another reliable prognostic variable.

Key words:

Colon cancer - prognostic factors – survival

Use of Enzyme and Heparin Paste in Acute Haemorrhoids

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Abstract

Background. While treating acutely inflamed piles, surgeons in general prefer to stick to the conservative method of treatment. This includes bed rest in a Trendelenburg's or jack-knife position, administration of liquid diet, stool softeners, antibiotics, and anti-inflammatory drugs along with warm Sitz baths and local application of glycerin and magnesium sulphate paste.

We introduced an additional method in treating acutely inflamed piles. Ten tablets of trypsin and chymotrypsin (Chymoral forte, Elder Pharmaceuticals India) were powdered and were mixed with 30 grams of heparin (Thrombophobe, German Remedies Ltd, Germany) ointment. This paste was applied to the inflamed pile mass. In all, 67 received this in patient treatment with an average hospital stay of 2 days. The results were compared using chi2 test with similarly placed 22 patients who were treated with the conventional method only. Results. In the patients receiving the application of the enzyme paste, local pain was reduced to a great extent, the defecation was comfortable, there was negligible local pruritus, and the routine body movements of the patient were painless. Local signs observed in the form of the size of the piles, perianal edema, and tenderness, were also found to be significantly reduced. Conclusion. The results of this study demonstrate that the additional use of a heparin-enzyme paste applied directly over the pile masses significantly improves the healing and resolution of acutely inflamed hemorrhoids. The effectiveness of the traditional conservative method of treatment could be gainfully supplemented by use of the pharmaceutical preparation suggested in this study.

Keywords Enzyme paste - heparin paste – acute hemorrhoids

REVIEWS

Effect of Ethanol and Alcoholic Beverages on the Gastrointestinal Tract in Humans

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Abstract

Alcohol abuse ranks among the most common and severe environmental hazards to human health. Alcohol is a dependence producing drug and this dependence is associated with an increased risk of morbidity and mortality. While the social and behavioural consequences of alcoholism including psychiatric disorders are staggering, the manifestation of alcohol-related diseases is the most widespread somatic effect. In research conducted both at the social and individual level, alcohol was found to increase the risk of death from a number of specific causes, including injury from traffic accidents and other trauma, violence, suicide, liver cirrhosis, cancer of the liver, breast cancer, haemorrhagic stroke, alcoholic psychosis, alcohol dependence and chronic pancreatitis. The apparent beneficial effect of modest alcohol consumption (one to three drinks per day) on mortality and morbidity rates particularly relating to cardiovascular disease on the other side are of recent interest. Public health policy should aim at reducing the harm done by alcohol use, whilst recognizing its perceived and possible real benefits. The aim of this review is to introduce the reader to the definition of alcohol dependence and alcoholism, and summarize our knowledge about the effects of alcohol consumption on the gastrointestinal tract.

Key words Alcohol abuse – gastrointestinal tract – liver – pancreas

case **reports**
Mucinous Digestive Tumors. Case Reports and Review of the Literature

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Abstract

We present three rare entities of mucinous tumors: appendiceal mucinous adenomas, enteroid mucinous cyst and pseudomyxoma peritonei, the latter as a developmental course or separate idiopathic etiology of mucinous tumors. We attempted to clarify the term of pseudomyxoma peritonei, a poorly understood condition, characterized by a diffuse intraperitoneal collection of gelatinous fluid with mucinous tumoral implants on the peritoneal surfaces. With this rare condition it is often difficult to establish the histological and developmental malignant or benign characteristics. We analyzed 4 patients admitted during the period of February 2000 - February 2002 in the First Surgical Clinic of St. Spiridon Hospital and in addition we referred to the current approach in the recent literature. In three of the four patients the diagnosis was possible preoperatively by imaging techniques and consequently they were operated by laparoscopic procedure for the complete removal of tumor cells at macroscopic level. We preferred to administrate chemotherapy accordingly to the malignant/ benign aspect, choosing the long term follow up of the patients to ward off the eventual relapse. We considered the future state of these cases to be uneventful, with a real chance of long term survival.

In conclusion, the symptoms are not always specific, allowing errors in diagnosis. Imaging techniques offer real elements of diagnosis. Laparoscopic techniques could offers an oncologic approach with no less benefit compared to open surgery. This methodology also allows different surgery for a different pathology at the same time. The origin of these tumors is more frequently digestive and less ovarian.

Key words

Mucinous tumors - pseudomyxoma peritonei – mucocele - enteroid cyst – cystadenoma - cystadenocarcinoma

Jaundice After Billroth II Resection. A Case Report

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Abstract

Ultrasonography is the first line imaging investigation in patients with jaundice, right upper quadrant pain, or hepatomegaly. Most patients with jaundice have parenchymal or obstructive jaundice. A 56-year old man was admitted to the Institute of Digestive Diseases, Belgrade, with severe pains in the epigastrium, vomiting, icteric coloration of sclera, white stools and dark urine. The symptoms had developed 5 days after a Billroth II resection. The functional liver test indicated a pronounced cholestasis. Real-time ultrasonography showed in the projection of the pancreas head, a clear bordered anechogenic oval formation, with a size of 40 x 35 mm. This finding indicated a possibility of an afferent loop obstruction, accompanied by consecutive obstructive icterus due to compression on the common bile duct. Ultrasonographic examination was followed by surgical reintervention. With the development of noninvasive imaging, transcutaneous ultrasonography, computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging, the diagnosis of pancreatic and other cysts in upper abdomen is usually straightforward. The important ultrasonographic characteristic of empty organs, compared to cysts and pseudocysts, is a change in the morphology and size of organs after a specific time interval. Air bubbles in the organs lumen are like mobile reflectors, and they are an important sign in identifying segments of the gastrointestinal tract.

Key words: Jaundice - Billroth II resection – ultrasonography

TECHNIQUE AND CASE REPORT
Endoscopic Mucosal Resection for Early Esophageal Cancer. A Case Report

Liliana Dina, Marcel Tantau, Daniela Dumitra, Teodor Zaharia, Oliviu Pascu, Mircea Grigorescu, Monica Acalovschi

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Abstract

With the rapid progress of the diagnostic techniques, especially endoscopy, the discovery rate of early superficial cancer of the esophagus has increased markedly. Relatively recently introduced, endoscopic mucosal resection (EMR) is now widely used in the treatment of early stage cancer of the esophagus.

We used EMR in the case of a patient who was incidentally diagnosed with a type IIa early esophageal cancer using a band-ligating device. We had no serious complications. At the histopathological examination we noticed that the carcinoma involved the upper third of the submucosal layer. For this reason the patient was given additional therapy (radiotherapy), too. A month after the EMR, at the histological examination we found no local signs of recurrent disease.

Key words Endoscopic mucosal resection - early esophageal cancer - esophagectomy

clinical **imaging**
Application of the Doppler Ultrasound Examination in Digestive Tract
Arterial Pathology

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Abstract

Doppler ultrasonography represents a noninvasive method of examination of the peripheral vessels which has been known for a long time. The application of the technique in splanchnic vascularization provides information regarding the vessels permeability, collateral circulation (in case of total obstruction), hemodynamic alterations in normal and pathological conditions. Though the results reported in literature regarding the method are contradictory, the use of Doppler ultrasound for the assessment of splanchnic circulation is encouraging and the technique may represent a method of patient selection for invasive examinations.

KeywordsDoppler ultrasound - vascular ultrasound