

Are we providing the correct pancreatic enzyme treatment in chronic pancreatitis?

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Podcast Episode

Pancreas

January 2, 2023

A cross-sectional study of 1000 chronic pancreatitis patients in the Scandinavian Baltic database found that only 64% received pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy doses meeting a threshold of 100,000 units per day, despite treatment by expert centres.

KEY POINTS

- The study used faecal elastase with a 200 microgram per gram stool cut-off to diagnose pancreatic exocrine insufficiency and set 100,000 European units per day as the treatment adequacy threshold, lower than strict guideline interpretation to account for irregular eating in this population.
- Guideline adherence varied widely between centres, ranging from 19% to 90%, potentially reflecting differences in healthcare systems, economic resources, and whether centres prioritised surgical versus medical management.
- Current smoking was associated with lack of treatment and alcohol abuse with under-treatment, but under-treatment showed no measurable impact on body mass index or vitamin D levels in this cohort.
- The speakers argued that when pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy is prescribed, higher doses should be given, and that re-establishing direct pancreas function testing in routine practice could improve diagnosis and management.

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