

Etiology in adults

John Leeds

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Presentation

Immunology

Pancreas

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The speaker reviewed the classification and etiology of chronic pancreatitis, emphasizing that smoking is a more important modifiable risk factor than alcohol for disease progression and that proper classification helps guide management and screening decisions.

KEY POINTS

- The speaker stated that smoking is more important than alcohol as both a cause and progression factor for chronic pancreatitis, citing a study showing patients who stopped smoking had less progression than those who stopped drinking.
- Around 20% of acute pancreatitis patients develop recurrent acute pancreatitis, and approximately 35% of those progress to chronic pancreatitis over their lifetime, though many cases are subclinical.
- The TIGAR-O classification system divides chronic pancreatitis into six etiologic groups (toxic-metabolic, idiopathic, genetic, autoimmune, recurrent/severe acute, obstructive), recently updated to TIGAR-O-2, with the goal of reducing idiopathic cases to less than 10%.
- Patients with PRSS1 genetic mutations have higher pancreatic cancer risk and should undergo screening, and genetic testing may change surgical management decisions.
- The speaker advocates for continuous glucose monitoring (specifically Libre devices) for type 3 diabetic patients with chronic pancreatitis, stating it revolutionizes diabetes care and improves gastric emptying and medication absorption.
- Pancreatic duct stones are part of the disease process rather than the disease itself, unlike gallstones, so removing them does not eliminate the underlying chronic inflammation and fibrosis.

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