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Summary

Persistent or relapsing symptoms in treated coeliac disease

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The speaker reviewed persistent and relapsing symptoms in treated coeliac disease, reporting that symptoms affect a substantial proportion of patients on gluten-free diet and are most strongly associated with psychological factors rather than gluten exposure or other organic causes.

KEY POINTS

- In the speaker's multidimensional cohort study of almost 200 consecutive patients, 66% were symptomatic despite treatment, and symptomatic patients paradoxically showed strict adherence to the gluten-free diet.
- In multivariable analysis, somatisation was the only factor associated with symptomatic course, with an odds ratio of almost 14, and brain-gut interaction disorders were present in 90% of symptomatic cases.
- The speaker stated that approximately 30% of adults on gluten-free diet have persistent duodenal damage long-term, and after one year of treatment only 13% of patients in the speaker's study achieved normalised duodenal mucosa.
- Histological misdiagnosis is common, with one study reporting up to 40% misdiagnosis, mostly overdiagnosis, and the speaker emphasised that reassessment of diagnosis and adherence is required in non-responsive cases.
- The International Society for Study of Coeliac Disease has created a working group to replace the term non-responsive coeliac disease with DIRECTION, standing for dietary contamination, refractory complications, and ongoing symptoms, with consensus definitions forthcoming.

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