

A Short Report on Focal Autoimmune Pancreatitis

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Autoimmune pancreatitis (AIP) is a chronic fibroinflammatory autoimmune mediated disease of the pancreas. It is a rare, but increasingly recognized disease. Clinically, obstructive painless jaundice and upper abdominal pain are the main presentations.

Focusing on focal AIP, describing the available tests to better diagnose the disease ruling out pancreatic cancer and giving a possible effective diagnostic approach.

Focal AIP (f-AIP) is characterized by a segmental involvement of the pancreatic parenchyma and it is often radiologically represented by a pancreatic mass. In these cases, the diagnosis can be very challenging, as the main diagnostic problem is that it may be easily confused with pancreatic cancer. Then, being the f-AIP a benign condition dramatically responsive to steroid therapy, it is mandatory to rule out the cancer. However, the prevalence of pancreatic cancer in the general population is much higher than that of AIP; it is the fourth leading cause of cancer related fatalities in Western countries and early treatment is crucial for achieving cure.

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