

A cystic lesion mimicking pancreatic neoplasm

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To the Editor,

A 54-year old male patient was admitted with complaints of periodical pain in the upper abdomen, CA-19.9-51 U/ml (reference range < 37 U/ml). Blood tests were normal. However, ultrasound scan results revealed growth of a pancreatic tumor over 52×38 mm. A CT scan was performed for further characterization of the lesion. A tumor mass of 54 mm in diameter of the pancreatic body was found. There was no differentiation of lesion border with pancreas body (Fig. 1). Surgical resection was performed without preoperative biopsy following the consensus of the International Study Group of Pancreatic Surgery which states that in the presence of a solid mass suspicious for malignancy, a biopsy proof is not required before proceeding with resection (1). A soft consistence pancreas cyst with pus-like content was resected during surgical operation. Histopathology examination revealed a presence of squamous epithelial-lined cysts in the pancreas (Fig. 2A), with lymphoid tissue surrounding the epithelium (Fig. 2B). A positive expression of CK5 (Fig. 2C) was revealed adjacent to the squamous epithelium of the cyst with lymphoid tissue predominantly expressing CD3 marker (Fig. 2D). The diagnosis of the lymphoepithelial cyst of the pancreas was conducted based on the above data. Postoperative period passed without any complications and the patient was discharged from the hospital in good health.

Lymphoepithelial cyst of the pancreas is an extremely rare, benign cyst mimicking pseudocyst or cystic neoplasm of the pancreas (2). It is reported to be approximately 0.5% of all pancreatic cysts. Luchtrath et al. first reported lymphoepithelial cyst in 1985, and Truong et al. named these lesions lymphoepithelial cysts of the pancreas in 1987 (3). The theories suggest that the formation of the cysts arises from squamous metaplasia of the pancreatic ducts or derivation from epithelial remnants in lymph nodes or possible displacement of branchial cysts during the pancreatic embryogenesis (4). Unlike other true pancreatic cysts, lymphoepithelial cysts do not have any malignant potential.

Conflict of interest

No potential conflict of interests declared.

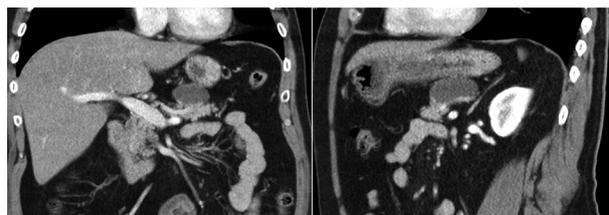


Fig. 1. — CT scan showing pancreatic lesion.

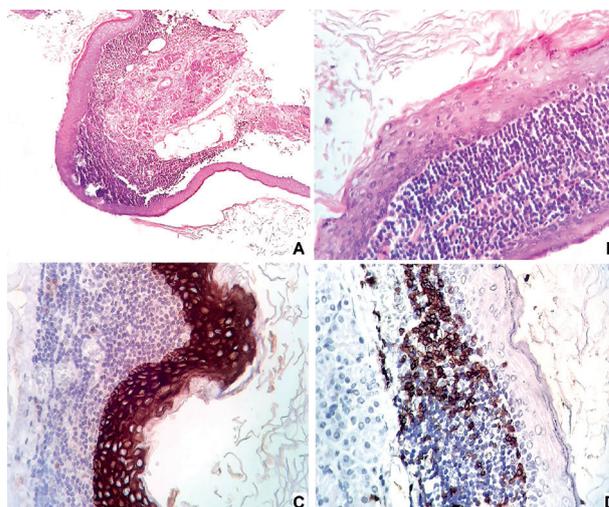


Fig. 2. — A. Lymphoepithelial cyst in the pancreas tissue ; B. Squamous epithelium in close association with lymphoid tissue ; C. CK5 expression by squamous epithelium of cyst wall ; D. CD3 expression by lymphoid component of the cyst wall.

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