

The Pancreas: The Illustrious Unknown!

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This organ is found profoundly in the human body. It is a calm, and silent organ located behind the stomach and in front of the spine column. Many diseases involving physiology and pathological problems are closely related to its behavior, which up until now has been a great *incognito* for all of us!

The pancreas can be described in one word “complicated.” Not trying to claim the honors from anybody, but I remember a particular phrase which marked my academic studies about this illustrious unknown. The phrase quotation was: “*The pancreas is an organ which brings the physician down to earth at grass roots level*”. An eminent surgeon spoke these words, showing his utter deception at realizing he had made an erroneous diagnosis of a pancreas illness and consequently demonstrated perfectly just how difficult it is to arrive at an optimum diagnosis. In view of the difficulties to decipher the paths chosen by this organ to develop diseases and to challenge the medical knowledge, it is important to know its anatomy, and embryology, besides this we know that the diseases which occur are correlated to patient's age.

When we analyze the pancreas embryology it can be seen that it develops starting at a fusion point of two buds fused in one organ with a ductal system similar to a “fallen pine cone” surrounded by the biliary tract and duodenal arch.

The pancreatic pathological findings may be in naturally in essence focal and/or irregular, since we frequently come across normal tissue adjacent to focal affected tissue especially in non-tumorous lesions.

Currently, various imaging methods and different approaches allow for a highly detailed investigation of the pancreatic parenchyma. It can be seen in detail and in most cases it is possible to repeat images or carry out sequences of the same. Nowadays another challenge is to obtain safe biopsy. At this point it is essential and fundamental to analyse the risk involved with this methodology and evaluate the possibility of any sampling error coupled with the small size samples, because of the differentials due to unequal distribution of pathological foci or neighboring areas disease free.

A major challenging worry is the early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer or premalignant lesions. It is easy to imagine how difficult it is to obtain a correct diagnosis, because this disease in the overwhelming number of cases are diagnosed in the advanced stage, when there is no chance of satisfactory cure.

Even allowing for the uncontested advances in imaging methods and biopsy techniques, these results are disappointing and therefore, the efforts of numerous scientists and researchers must be praised. Therefore, the publication of another journal, the *Pancreatic Disorders & Therapy* has great relevance, to serve as a channel for scientific researchers who are interested in this illustrious unknown.

My hope is that this publication will be a useful reference source for all those who wish to investigate and conduct research in the field of pancreatology.

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