

Preface

In September 2007, several experts in the field of pancreatic pathophysiology, supported by the NATO Science Committee, met in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, to present their most recent data and discuss basic, genetic, clinical, and surgical aspects of pancreatic diseases.

In basic research, the implication of pancreatic stress proteins in acute pancreatitis and pancreatic cancer and their possible role as therapeutic targets were reported. Also, very original results showing the unexpected role of lipids as mediators that worsen acute pancreatitis were described. Gene screening strategies allowing detection of the genes responsible for gemcitabine resistance of pancreatic cancer cells were presented. They led to the selection of several target genes to suppress the resistance of cells to gemcitabine treatment. The mechanism by which tetrahydrocannabinol is antitumoral in pancreatic cancer cells was presented and the use of tetrahydrocannabinol as a promising new therapeutic agent was discussed. Genetic data were shown concerning hundreds of families with hereditary chronic pancreatitis and the possible role of genetic factors in the pathogenesis of the disease was analyzed. Another very original study addressed the prevention and treatment of pancreatic diseases with diet. In clinical research, convincing data on the use of endoscopic sphincterotomy in the management of acute biliary pancreatitis were presented. Finally, the most recent consensus on indications for surgery in acute necrotizing pancreatitis was presented, based on the experience of a center highly specialized in pancreatic diseases.

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Pancreatology

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