

International Conference and Exhibition on Gastrointestinal Therapeutics

August 25-27, 2015 Valencia, Spain

Small-bowel capsule endoscopy and device-assisted enteroscopy for diagnosis and treatment of small bowel disorders

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Endoscopic evaluation of the small bowel (i. e., enteroscopy), on the other hand, poses a unique challenge that has plagued physicians for decades. With the development of new enteroscopic modalities, a more thorough evaluation is now possible. These new techniques comprise small-bowel video capsule endoscopy (VCE) and device-assisted enteroscopy; the latter includes double-balloon enteroscopy (DBE), single-balloon enteroscopy (SBE), spiral enteroscopy, and balloon-guided endoscopy. VCE has revolutionized small-bowel imaging by providing a reliable and non-invasive method for complete visualization and assessment of the mucosal surface. Given the increased detection of small-bowel disease by VCE, innovations in device-assisted enteroscopy have been crucial for histopathological confirmation, enabling endoscopic therapy in selected cases and thus avoiding the need for surgery.

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Endoscopic management of Barrett's Esophagus: Watch, ablate, or resect?

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Until recently, when endoscopic screening or surveillance revealed high-grade dysplasia in Barrett's esophagus, the standard treatment was esophagectomy, a procedure associated with considerable morbidity and mortality. In recent years, endoscopic techniques have been developed to ablate or resect dysplastic Barrett mucosa with far less morbidity than esophagectomy and with virtually no mortality. Endoscopic ablation techniques deliver thermal or photo to chemical energy to the esophageal mucosa with the intent of destroying the Barrett's metaplasia, and ablation techniques do not provide a tissue specimen for histologic examination. Barrett's metaplasia also can be removed by endoscopic mucosal resection (EMR), in which large segments of esophageal mucosa and sub-mucosa are resected with a diathermic snare, and submitted for histologic examination. Endoscopic mucosal resection can be therapeutic (because it removes neoplastic mucosa), and EMR provides invaluable information regarding the depth of tumor involvement (T stage). Endoscopic mucosal resection (EMR) is an endoscopic therapeutic proposal in which the dysplastic epithelium is removed, thus making it possible for a definitive histologic diagnosis and treatment.

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