

Question 24 – Week of December 13

55 year old male presents with obstructive jaundice. CT scan shows an enlarged pancreatic head. He has also developed diabetes within the last 6 months and has lost 5 pounds of weight in the last 3 months. He denies pruritus but complains of dry mouth. He was unable to undergo an MRCP. IgG4 was elevated, greater than 2 times normal.

What percentage of patients with pancreatic cancer will have an elevated IgG4 in this range?

- A. 0%
- B. 1-2%
- C. 5-10%
- D. 20-30%
- E. 30-40%

Answer: B

The single best marker of autoimmune pancreatitis is elevated serum levels of IgG4 (sensitivity 75% , specificity 93%). However, 5-10% of non- AIP patients have elevated serum IgG4 levels. Serum IgG4 levels greater than 2 times upper limit of normal are highly specific for AIP, but can occur in about 1.5 % of pancreatic tumors.

Type I AIP may be defined as the pancreatic manifestation of IgG4-associated systemic disease. It is a systemic fibro-inflammatory disease which afflicts not only the pancreas but also various other organs including bile ducts, salivary glands, the retroperitoneum and lymph nodes. The organs affected have a lymphoplasmacytic infiltrate rich in IgG4 positive cells.