

All Nodules Are Not Equal: A Rare Presentation of Pancreatic Cancer

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INTRODUCTION

Pancreatic cancer has a 5-year survival of 11%. Diagnosis is complicated by an atypical presentation such as malignant transformation of an ectopic pancreas (EP).

CASE

- A 71-year-old female with complicated past medical history presented with acute on chronic abdominal pain.
- She had recently underwent upper and lower endoscopy with normal findings on pathology.
- Non-contrast computed tomography of the abdomen and pelvis revealed a new mesenteric nodule.
- The patient was treated with ciprofloxacin and metronidazole without improvement.
- 6 weeks later, a follow-up CT showed enlargement of the nodule, and referrals were placed for endoscopic ultrasound and surgical oncology evaluation.
- Endoscopic ultrasound identified a heterogenous 3cm x 2.1cm periduodenal lesion and fine needle core biopsy was obtained (Figure 2).
- Pathology was consistent with pancreatic adenocarcinoma (Figure 3).

Malignant transformation of ectopic pancreas is a rare cause of pancreatic cancer.

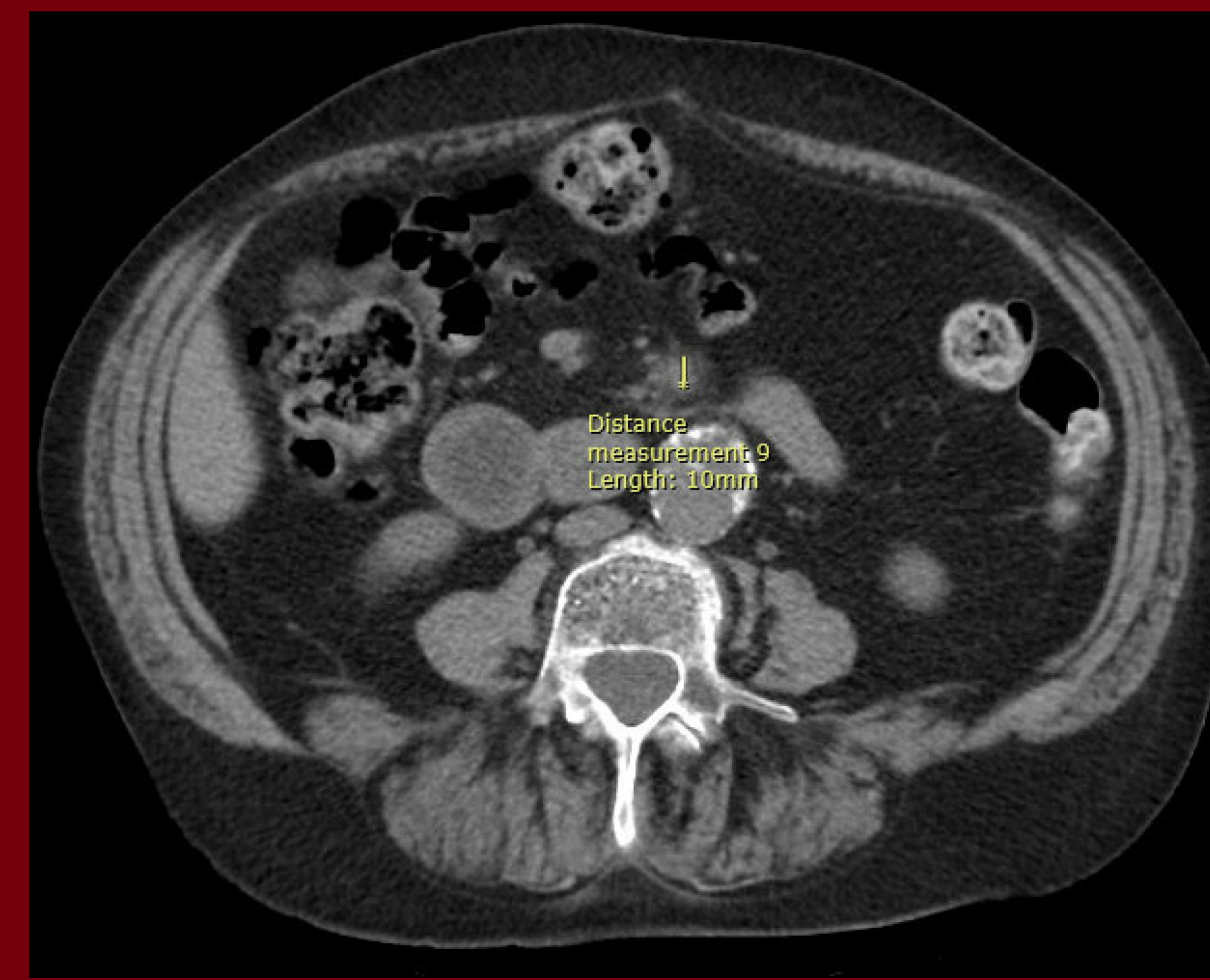


Fig. 1 CT abdomen and pelvis showing a 10mm mesenteric nodule adjacent to the third portion of the duodenum.



Fig. 2 EUS showing a heterogenous 3x2.1cm periduodenal lesion.

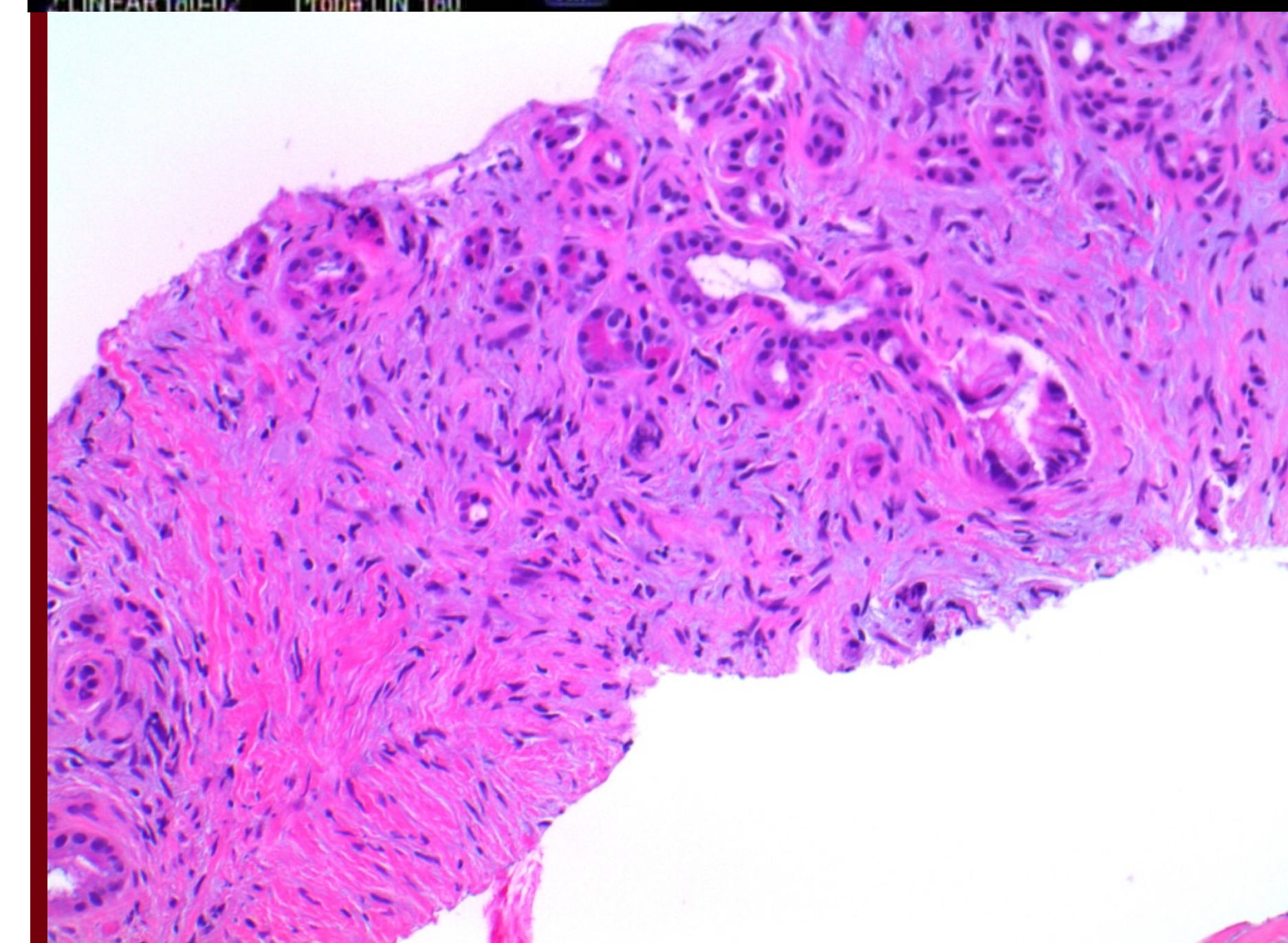


Fig. 3 Core biopsy obtained during EUS revealing desmoplastic pancreatic tissue with irregular/abortive infiltrating glands with nuclear enlargement.

- The patient was deemed to not be a surgical candidate due to multiple comorbidities and was initiated on adjuvant chemotherapy.
- Due to adverse effects from chemotherapy and worsening intractable pain, the patient decided to pursue comfort and hospice care.

DISCUSSION

- EP is an uncommon phenomenon that rarely progresses to malignancy.
- Common locations of EP include stomach, duodenum, and jejunum.
- Malignant transformation commonly presents with symptoms of obstruction, such as abdominal or epigastric pain and vomiting.
- There may be slightly better prognosis with malignant transformation of EP compared to other pancreatic cancer due to earlier presentation with the above symptoms.
- EUS provides a valuable, less invasive diagnostic tool compared to typical surgical resection.

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