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## Metronidazole for gastritis

*H pylori* are gram-negative bacteria that colonize and infect the stomach. The bacteria lodge within the mucous layer of the stomach along the gastric surface epithelium and the upper portions of the gastric foveolae and rarely are present in the deeper glands (see the 3 images below). Atrophic gastritis. Schematic representation of Helicobacter pylori-associated patterns of gastritis. Involvement of the corpus, fundus, and gastric antrum, with progressive development of gastric atrophy as a result of the loss of gastric glands and partial replacement of gastric glands by intestinal-type epithelium, or intestinal metaplasia (represented by the blue areas in the diagram) characterize multifocal atrophic gastritis. Individuals who develop gastric carcinoma and gastric ulcers usually present with this pattern of gastritis. Inflammation mostly limited to the antrum characterizes antral-predominant gastritis. Individuals with peptic ulcers usually develop this pattern of gastritis, and it is the most frequent pattern in the Western countries. Patterns of atrophic gastritis associated with chronic Helicobacter pylori infection and autoimmune gastritis. Atrophic gastritis. Helicobacter pylori-associated chronic active gastritis (Genta stain, 20x). Multiple organisms (brown) are observed adhering to gastric surface epithelial cells. A mononuclear lymphoplasmacytic and polymorphonuclear cell infiltrate is observed in the mucosa. The infection is usually acquired during childhood and progresses over the lifespan of the individual if left untreated. The host response to the presence of *H pylori* is composed of a T-lymphocytic and B-lymphocytic response, followed by infiltration of the lamina propria and gastric epithelium by polymorphonuclear leukocytes (PMNs) that eventually phagocytize the bacteria. Significant damage associated with the release of bacterial and inflammatory toxic products is inflicted on the gastric epithelial cells, resulting in increasing cell loss or gastric atrophy over time. Weck published a study supporting their hypothesis that the association between *H pylori* and chronic atrophic gastritis was greatly underestimated due to the clearance of the infection in advanced stages of the disease. [5] These results suggest that the association is much stronger than estimated by most epidemiologic studies to date. Another study also reported that mannan-binding lectin allele (MBL2 codon 54 B) is associated with a higher risk of developing more severe gastric mucosal atrophy in *H pylori*-infected Japanese patients. [6] During the process of gastric mucosal atrophy, some glandular units develop an intestinal-type epithelium, and intestinal metaplasia eventually occurs in multiple foci throughout the gastric mucosa when atrophic gastritis is fully established. Other glands are simply replaced by fibrous tissue, resulting in an expanded lamina propria. [7] Loss of gastric glands in the corpus, or corpus atrophy, reduces parietal cell numbers, which results in significant functional changes with decreased levels of acid secretion and increased gastric pH. [8] Hypochloridia or achloridia raises serum gastrin levels, thereby increasing the risk for the development of neuroendocrine tumors. [8] Studies have also reported that moderate alcohol consumption may be associated with atrophic gastritis by facilitating *H pylori* clearance. [9] *H pylori*-associated chronic gastritis progresses with 2 main topographic patterns that have different clinicopathologic consequences. The first is antral predominant gastritis. Inflammation that is mostly limited to the antrum characterizes antral predominant gastritis. Individuals with peptic ulcers usually develop this pattern of gastritis, and it is the most frequently observed pattern in Western countries. The second is multifocal atrophic gastritis. Involvement of the corpus, fundus, and gastric antrum with progressive development of gastric atrophy (ie, loss of gastric glands) and partial replacement of gastric glands by intestinal-type epithelium (intestinal metaplasia) characterize multifocal atrophic gastritis. Individuals who develop gastric carcinoma and gastric ulcers usually have this pattern of gastritis. This pattern is observed more often in developing countries and in Asia. The development of chronic atrophic gastritis limited to corpus-fundus mucosa and marked diffuse atrophy of parietal and chief cells characterize autoimmune atrophic gastritis, as shown in the following two images. Patterns of atrophic gastritis associated with chronic Helicobacter pylori infection and autoimmune gastritis. Atrophic gastritis. Intestinal metaplasia of the gastric mucosa (Genta stain, 20x). Intestinal-type epithelium with numerous goblet cells (stained blue with the Alcian blue stain) replace the gastric mucosa and represent gastric atrophy. Mild chronic inflammation is observed in the lamina propria. This pattern of atrophy is observed both in Helicobacter pylori-associated atrophic gastritis and autoimmune gastritis. Autoimmune gastritis is associated with serum antiparietal and anti-intrinsic factor antibodies that cause intrinsic factor (IF) deficiency, which, in turn, causes decreased availability of cobalamin (vitamin B-12) and, eventually, pernicious anemia in some patients. Palladino reported that methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase (MTHFR) polymorphisms may be associated with B12 deficiency and autoimmune atrophic gastritis. [10] Autoantibodies are directed against at least 3 antigens, including IF, cytoplasmic (microsomal-canalicular), and plasma membrane antigens. Two types of IF antibodies are detected (types I and II). Type I IF antibodies block the IF-cobalamin binding site, thus preventing the uptake of vitamin B12. Cell-mediated immunity also contributes to the disease. [11] T-cell lymphocytes infiltrate the gastric mucosa and contribute to the epithelial cell destruction and resulting gastric atrophy. Stummvoll reported that Th17 cells induced the most destructive disease with cellular infiltrates composed primarily of eosinophils accompanied by high levels of serum IgE. [12] Polyclonal Treg also suppresses the capacity of Th1 cells and moderately suppresses Th2 cells, but it can suppress Th17-induced disease only at early time points. The major effect of Treg was to inhibit the expansion of the effector T cells. However, effector cells isolated from protected animals were not anergic and were fully competent to proliferate and produce effector cytokines ex vivo. [12] The strong inhibitory effect of polyclonal Treg on the capacity of some types of differentiated effector cells to induce disease provides an experimental basis for the clinical use of polyclonal Treg in the treatment of autoimmune disease in humans. The above findings led to an interesting study by Huter et al, who reported that antigen-specific-induced Treg are potent suppressors of autoimmune gastritis induced by both fully differentiated Th1 and Th17 effector cells. The investigators analyzed the suppressive capacity of different types of Treg to suppress Th1- and Th17-mediated autoimmune gastritis by comparing nTreg with polyclonal TGFbeta-induced WT Treg (iTreg) or TGFbeta-induced antigen-specific TxA23 iTreg in cotransfer experiments with Th1 or Th17 TxA23 effector T cells. [13] Th1-mediated disease was prevented by cotransfer of nTreg and also antigen-specific iTreg, whereas WT iTreg did not show an effect. 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