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Utility of rapid urease test in suspected cases of chronic *H. pylori* gastritis-A clinicopathological correlate

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Chronic *H. pylori* infection is one of the most commonest and prevalent infections worldwide. In Pakistan the prevalence of the disease has been on the rise in the last few decades. Chronic gastritis is the most commonly observed lesion associated with chronic *H. pylori* infection. The detection of the bacteria and timely commenced eradication therapy is the key to decline the threatening consequences of the infection including malignancy. The objectives of the study were to determine the frequency of *H. pylori* infection by rapid urease test and comparison of endoscopic and histopathological findings in adult dyspeptic patients. It was a descriptive study, carried out in 7 months. The study was performed in Medical Unit-I of Lahore General Hospital and the histopathological work was executed at Department of Morbid Anatomy and Histopathology, University of Health Sciences, Lahore. A total of 30 cases were included in the study. Each patient was sampled for gastric biopsies according to the Updated Sydney System 2012 and five biopsies per patient were taken. Rapid urease test was performed in each patient followed by histopathological examination with H&E and Giemsa staining. A total number of 30 cases underwent upper GI endoscopy with the mean age of 33.4 ± 8 yrs. Out of 30 cases, 43.3% were males and 56.7% were females. About 96.7% cases reported abdominal pain and discomfort as their major symptom. The commonest finding of gastritis on endoscopy was hyperemia and congestion which was seen in 90% cases. The most commonly involved anatomical locations of gastritis on endoscopy were antral and pangastritis with an equal frequency of 43.3% each. Rapid urease test was positive in 100% cases. On histopathology 100% cases showed chronic gastritis of which 50% had marked degree of inflammation. Inflammatory activity was seen in 86.7% of the cases and antral-predominant gastritis was most prevalent (36.7% cases). The mild atrophic changes and intestinal metaplasia were observed in 46.7% and 3.3% of the cases respectively. A combination of endoscopic findings and rapid urease test has a good correlation with histopathological findings on H&E and Giemsa staining. However a prospective study on a larger number of cases is suggested to make a more definitive conclusion.

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