

Is Hepatitis B Virus a Player in Pancreatic Cancer?

Traian Dumitrascu^{1,2}, Pascal Pineau³

¹Fundeni Clinical Institute, "Dan Setlacec" Center of General Surgery and Liver Transplant, Bucharest

²"Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest, Romania

³Unité "Organisation nucléaire et oncogénèse", INSERM U993, Institut Pasteur, Paris, France

Abstract

Pancreatic cancer (i.e., pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma, PDAC) is an important healthcare issue and a highly lethal disease. Thus, almost 80% of patients with PDAC will die within one year after diagnosis. Several factors including smoking, obesity, advanced age, diabetes mellitus and chronic pancreatitis have been associated with increased risk of PDAC. Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection is also considered as a risk factor for PDAC development in some studies. However, the role of HBV infection in PDAC is poorly explored. The present paper reviews the current relevant literature exploring the impact of HBV infection in PDAC. Assessment of HBV infection impact in PDAC is challenging because its effects could be easily underestimated. Indeed, the role played by occult B infection (OBI) and intrinsic difficulties to detect HBV antigens or DNA in pancreatic tissue remains major limitations to further progress. To date a significant proportion of available literature suggests the potential oncogenic role of HBV in PDAC but experimental evidences remain scarce. Remarkably, it appears that HBV infection might influence some clinical and pathological features of patients with PDAC. Future researches to better define the role of HBV infection in developing PDAC are urgently needed.

Key words: hepatitis B virus, occult B infection, pancreatic cancer, epidemiology, risk factor, outcomes