

What is Pancreatic Anatomy?

Worksheet

The pancreas is divided into four regions - head, neck, body and tail - running from the C-loop of the duodenum on the right to the spleen on the left, each with distinct vascular relationships.

Questions

1. Which part of the pancreas sits within the duodenal C-loop?
 - A) Tail
 - B) Body
 - C) Head
 - D) Neck
2. What structure passes directly behind the pancreatic neck?
 - A) Aorta
 - B) Superior mesenteric vessels
 - C) Splenic hilum
 - D) Common bile duct
3. What is the uncinata process?
 - A) The tail's tip
 - B) A hook-like extension of the head
 - C) Part of the spleen
 - D) The main pancreatic duct
4. Which pancreatic division lies closest to the spleen?
 - A) Head
 - B) Neck
 - C) Body
 - D) Tail
5. A pancreatic tumor compresses the superior mesenteric vein where it passes behind the gland. Which division of the pancreas is involved?
6. On imaging, a mass extends behind the mesenteric vessels from the head. What is this extension called?
7. A patient has a lesion near the splenic hilum, at the far left end of the pancreas. Which division is affected?
8. Define: How many main divisions does the pancreas have?
9. Define: Where does the pancreatic head sit?
10. Define: What is the uncinata process?

Answer Key

1. C) Head - The head of the pancreas is cradled by the C-shaped curve of the duodenum.
2. B) Superior mesenteric vessels - The superior mesenteric artery and vein run behind the neck of the pancreas.
3. B) A hook-like extension of the head - The uncinate process is a posterior extension of the head, wrapping behind the mesenteric vessels.
4. D) Tail - The tail tapers toward and touches the splenic hilum.
5. The superior mesenteric vessels pass directly behind the neck of the pancreas. A tumor compressing these vessels at this point is located in the pancreatic neck. Answer: the neck of the pancreas.
6. The uncinate process is a hook-like extension of the pancreatic head. It curves posterior to the superior mesenteric artery and vein. So the extension seen behind the vessels is the uncinate process.
7. The pancreas narrows as it approaches the spleen on the left side. This tapering terminal segment near the splenic hilum is the tail. Answer: the tail of the pancreas.
8. Four: head, neck, body and tail.
9. Nestled within the C-loop of the duodenum.
10. A hook-shaped extension of the pancreatic head that curves behind the superior mesenteric vessels.

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