

Histological approach and differentiation of Crohn's disease and gastrointestinal tuberculosis: Recommendations from the joint IAPM-ISG-CCFI Working Group.

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The most common causes for ulcero-stricturing diseases of the ileo-cecal region and colon in Southeast Asia are Crohn's disease (CD) and gastrointestinal tuberculosis (GI TB). Diagnosing these conditions is challenging because they share several clinical, endoscopic, radiological and histological features on mucosal biopsies. Therefore, there is a need to standardize the sampling, processing and interpretation of mucosal biopsies to aid clinical decision-making.

Recognizing this challenge, core subject experts nominated by the Indian Association of Pathologists and Microbiologists (IAPM), the Indian Society of Gastroenterology (ISG) and the Colitis and Crohn's Foundation, India (CCFI), collaborated to formulate comprehensive recommendations for pathologists regarding optimal biopsy protocols, histological interpretation and reporting for differentiating CD from GI TB. A structured Delphi process was followed.

The recommendations from the core domain expert groups were based on discussions, brainstorming sessions and extensive literature reviews conducted over three virtual group meetings, multiple online voting sessions and one physical meeting involving all experts. This document is expected to standardize the practice of luminal gastroenterology by providing a ready reference for budding specialists and pathologists, thereby promoting uniformity in practice.

These multi-society, evidence-based and practically applicable recommendations developed by core subject experts aim to promote uniformity and confidence in pathology reports, facilitate timely patient management and prevent complications arising from erroneous treatment.