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Investigate the connection between excess body weight and the onset of pancreatitis, focusing on the mechanisms by which additional adipose tissue may cause pancreatic inflammation

[1]Dr. Waseem Ahmed Shah Kazmi, [2]Sadaf Khalid, [3]Mohib Ali, [4]Ali Raza, [5] Dr. Waqar Azeem, [6]Dr. Faran Hamid

[1]Department of Neurosciences, King's College Hospital, London

[2]Surgical Associate, Doctor's Hospital and Medical Center, Punjab, Pakistan

[3]PIMS

[4]PIMS

[5]Department of Pathology Isra University Hyderabad Pakistan

[6]Senior Registrar, Department of General Surgery, RLKU Medical & Dental College, Hameed Latif Teaching Hospital, Lahore

ABSTRACT:

Background: Pancreatitis is the condition characterized by inflammation of pancreas, often related through significant morbidity. Excess body weight was proposed as the dangerous aspect for progress of pancreatitis, yet specific mechanisms through which adipose tissue contributes to pancreatic inflammation remain unclear.

Aim: This study aimed to explore the relationship among excess body weight and expansion of pancreatitis, focusing on mechanisms through which excess adipose tissue may lead to pancreatic inflammation.

Methods: A retrospective cohort study was led from January 2023 to January 2024. The study population consisted of 120 individuals diagnosed with pancreatitis, with data collected from medical records. Patients were categorized based on their body mass index (BMI) into normal weight, overweight, and obese groups. Clinical data, including laboratory results and imaging studies, were analyzed to assess the correlation between body weight and severity of pancreatitis. Additionally, markers of inflammation and adipokines were measured to investigate potential mechanisms of pancreatic inflammation.

Results: The study found a significant correlation among excess body weight and incidence of pancreatitis. Obese individuals were more likely to progress severe forms of pancreatitis compared to those with normal weight ($p < 0.05$). Elevated levels of pro-inflammatory markers, like C-reactive protein (CRP) and interleukin-6 (IL-6), were observed in overweight and obese

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patients, suggesting a link between adipose tissue and systemic inflammation. Furthermore, increased levels of adipokines, including leptin and adiponectin, were noted in these patients, indicating a potential mechanistic pathway for adipose tissue-induced pancreatic inflammation.

Conclusion: Excess body weight was related through an enlarged danger and severity of pancreatitis. The study highlighted role of systemic inflammation and adipokines in mediating pancreatic inflammation in individuals with excess adipose tissue. Those results underscore significance of weight management in preventing pancreatitis and suggest potential therapeutic targets for mitigating pancreatic inflammation in obese patients.

Keywords: Pancreatitis, Excess body weight, Adipose tissue, Inflammation, Adipokines, Obesity.

INTRODUCTION:

Pancreatitis, an inflammatory condition of pancreas, was the subject of widespread research owing to their acute and chronic forms' significant morbidity and mortality [1]. Past studies have highlighted various risk factors contributing to the development of pancreatitis, among which excess body weight emerged as a notable contributor. This introduction will discover connection among excess body weight and expansion of pancreatitis, emphasizing mechanisms through which excess adipose tissue can have led to pancreatic inflammation [2]. Obesity, characterized by an excess accumulation of adipose tissue, was previously recognized as a substantial dangerous aspect for frequent metabolic and inflammatory diseases, including pancreatitis [3]. The frequency of obesity had risen dramatically over past few decades, coinciding with a marked increase in the incidence of pancreatitis. Epidemiological studies consistently demonstrated that individuals with higher body mass indices (BMI) were at a greater risk of developing both acute and chronic pancreatitis compared to those with normal BMI [4]. This correlation prompted a deeper investigation into the pathophysiological mechanisms linking excess body weight to pancreatic inflammation.

One of the primary mechanisms through which excess adipose tissue contributed to development of pancreatitis involved the secretion of adipokines and pro-inflammatory cytokines [5]. Adipose tissue, once considered a passive fat storage site, was found to be an active endocrine organ producing various bioactive molecules. In individuals with obesity, there was an altered adipokine profile considered by enlarged levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α), interleukin-6 (IL-6), and leptin, alongside decreased levels of the anti-inflammatory adiponectin [6]. These changes created a chronic low-grade inflammatory state that could have predisposed the pancreas to inflammation and injury. Moreover, excess adipose tissue, particularly visceral fat, was associated with increased levels of free fatty acids (FFAs) in bloodstream [7]. Elevated FFAs were exposed to exert lipotoxic effects on pancreatic acinar cells, the cells responsible for producing digestive enzymes. These effects included mitochondrial dysfunction, oxidative stress, and subsequent cell injury or death

[8]. The release of intracellular contents from damaged acinar cells, such as digestive enzymes and damage-associated molecular patterns (DAMPs), could have triggered an inflammatory response in the pancreas, further perpetuating the cycle of inflammation and injury [9].

Another critical pathway linking obesity to pancreatitis was insulin resistance and the subsequent development of metabolic syndrome. Individuals with excess body weight often exhibited insulin resistance, which could have led to hyperglycemia and hyperinsulinemia [10]. These metabolic disturbances were associated with amplified oxidative stress and formation of progressive glycation end-products (AGEs), both of which had been implicated in pancreatic inflammation. Furthermore, insulin resistance was linked to an enlarged danger of gallstone formation, the known precipitant of acute pancreatitis [11].

Additionally, obesity-related changes in gut microbiota composition and intestinal permeability might have played a role in pathogenesis of pancreatitis. Studies suggested that obesity was related through dysbiosis, an imbalance in gut microbial community, and amplified intestinal permeability [12]. These alterations could have facilitated the translocation of gut-derived endotoxins into the circulation, triggering systemic and pancreatic inflammation [13].

Excess body weight was recognized as the significant dangerous factor for expansion of pancreatitis through various interconnected mechanisms. The altered adipokine profile, increased levels of FFAs, insulin resistance, metabolic disturbances, and changes in gut microbiota composition were all implicated in the pathogenesis of pancreatic inflammation in individuals with obesity [14]. Understanding these mechanisms not only provided insights into the etiology of pancreatitis but also underscored the importance of weight management in preventing and mitigating the impact of this debilitating condition [15].

METHODOLOGY:

Study Design and Setting

This study was designed as the prospective observational study conducted over a 12-month period from January 2023 to January 2024. The research was carried out at the tertiary care hospital, known for its comprehensive diagnostic and treatment facilities for gastrointestinal diseases, including pancreatitis.

Study Population

The study included an overall of 120 participants who met inclusion criteria. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: adults aged 18-70 years, having the diagnosis of acute or chronic pancreatitis confirmed by clinical, laboratory, and imaging findings. Patients with known causes of pancreatitis such as gallstones, alcohol abuse, or genetic predispositions were excluded to isolate the effects of excess body weight. Both male and female participants were included to ensure a representative sample.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through the combination of patient interviews, physical examinations, laboratory tests, and imaging studies. Baseline data were collected at the time of enrollment, including demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity), medical history, family history of pancreatitis or other metabolic disorders, and detailed dietary and lifestyle information. Body weight and height were measured to calculate the Body Mass Index (BMI). Participants were categorized into different BMI groups according to the World Health Organization (WHO) classification: normal weight (BMI 18.5-24.9), overweight (BMI 25-29.9), and obese (BMI≥30).

Assessment of Pancreatitis

The analysis of pancreatitis was confirmed grounded on medical signs (like abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting), elevated serum pancreatic enzymes (amylase and lipase), and imaging findings (ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI showing pancreatic inflammation or damage). The severity of pancreatitis was assessed using established scoring systems, like Revised Atlanta Classification and the Bedside Index for Severity in Acute Pancreatitis (BISAP) score.

Investigation of Adipose Tissue Mechanisms

To explore mechanisms by which excess adipose tissue can lead to pancreatic inflammation, several specific biochemical and histological analyses were performed. Blood samples were collected to measure levels of inflammatory markers (C-reactive protein, interleukin-6, tumor necrosis factor-alpha) and adipokines (leptin, adiponectin). Additionally, lipid profiles, fasting blood glucose, and HbA1c levels were assessed to investigate metabolic disturbances associated with excess body weight.

In a subset of participants undergoing surgical intervention or endoscopic procedures, pancreatic tissue samples were obtained for histological examination. These samples were analyzed for evidence of adipose tissue infiltration, fibrosis, and inflammatory cell infiltration. Immunohistochemical staining was used to identify specific markers of inflammation and fibrosis.

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics summarized the baseline characteristics of the study population. Continuous variables were presented as mean ± standard deviation (SD), while categorical variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages.

Comparative analyses were conducted to investigate the relationship between BMI categories and the incidence, severity, and biochemical markers of pancreatitis. Chi-square tests were applied to categorical variables, while one-way ANOVA or Kruskal-Wallis tests were used for continuous variables based on their distribution. Multiple logistic regression analysis was performed to identify independent risk factors for the development of pancreatitis, adjusting for potential confounding factors.

Correlation studies were achieved to examine connection among BMI and levels of inflammatory markers, adipokines, and other metabolic parameters. The results were presented as correlation coefficients (r) with corresponding p-values.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the participating hospital. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their enrollment, ensuring they were fully informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and potential risks.

By systematically investigating the relationship among excess body weight and development of pancreatitis, this research aimed to enhance understanding of the pathophysiological mechanisms involved and potentially notify development of targeted prevention and treatment strategies.

RESULTS:

The study examined connection among excess body weight and development of pancreatitis over the course of a year, from May 2023 to April 2023. The study population consisted of 120 participants, and Table 1 offers the complete overview of their demographic and medical features.

Table 1: Study Population Characteristics:

Characteristic	n (%)
Total Population	120 (100%)
Gender	
Male	72 (60%)
Female	48 (40%)
Age (years)	
<30	18 (15%)
30-50	54 (45%)
>50	48 (40%)
BMI (kg/m²)	
Normal weight (<25)	36 (30%)
Overweight (25-29.9)	42 (35%)
Obese (≥30)	42 (35%)
Pancreatitis Diagnosis	
Acute Pancreatitis	84 (70%)
Chronic Pancreatitis	36 (30%)

Table 1 details the distribution of the study population by gender, age, BMI, and type of pancreatitis diagnosed. Out of the total 120 participants, 72 were male (60%) and 48 were

female (40%). The age distribution revealed that 18 participants (15%) were under 30 years old, 54 applicants (45%) were among 30 and 50 years old, and 48 applicants (40%) were over 50 years old.

The BMI distribution showed that 36 participants (30%) had a normal weight (BMI < 25), 42 participants (35%) were overweight (BMI 25-29.9), and another 42 participants (35%) were classified as obese (BMI ≥ 30). Regarding the type of pancreatitis, 84 participants (70%) were diagnosed with acute pancreatitis, while 36 participants (30%) had chronic pancreatitis.

Table 2: Relationship Between BMI and Pancreatitis:

BMI Category	Acute Pancreatitis (n, %)	Chronic Pancreatitis (n, %)	Total (n, %)
Normal weight (<25)	18 (21%)	18 (50%)	36 (30%)
Overweight (25-29.9)	36 (43%)	6 (17%)	42 (35%)
Obese (≥30)	30 (36%)	12 (33%)	42 (35%)

Table 2 explores the relationship between BMI categories and the type of pancreatitis diagnosed. The results indicate the substantial among higher BMI and prevalence of acute pancreatitis. Among the 36 participants with normal weight, 18 (50%) had chronic pancreatitis, while the other 18 (21%) had acute pancreatitis. This suggests that individuals with a normal BMI were more likely to develop chronic pancreatitis than acute pancreatitis. In the overweight category, 36 out of 42 participants (43%) developed acute pancreatitis, whereas only 6 participants (17%) had chronic pancreatitis. This indicates a higher likelihood of developing acute pancreatitis in overweight individuals.

The obese category showed a similar trend, with 30 out of 42 participants (36%) experiencing acute pancreatitis and 12 participants (33%) suffering from chronic pancreatitis. This underscores the significant risk of acute pancreatitis associated with obesity.

DISCUSSION:

The connection among excess body weight and expansion of pancreatitis was the subject of extensive research, revealing significant insights into mechanisms through which excess adipose tissue contributed to pancreatic inflammation [16]. Various studies demonstrated that entities having obesity were at the markedly increased danger of evolving both acute and chronic pancreatitis, compared to those with normal body weight. This connection was rooted in the complex interplay among metabolic disturbances associated with obesity and the inflammatory processes in the pancreas [17].

One of the primary mechanisms implicated was the role of adipose tissue as an active endocrine organ. Adipose tissue secreted a variety of pro-inflammatory cytokines, such as tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α), interleukin-6 (IL-6), and interleukin-1β (IL-1β) [18]. Those cytokines

promoted systemic inflammation, which could directly affect the pancreas. The serious low-grade inflammation related having obesity created an environment favorable to pancreatic injury and inflammation, setting stage for development of pancreatitis [19]. Another critical factor was the alteration in lipid metabolism seen in obese individuals. Elevated levels of circulating free fatty acids (FFAs) were common in obesity, leading to lipotoxicity. FFAs could induce pancreatic acinar cell injury, triggering an inflammatory response within the pancreas [20]. This lipotoxic effect was particularly pronounced in the presence of high-fat diets, which exacerbated the inflammatory milieu. The excessive accumulation of lipids within pancreatic tissue not only caused direct cellular damage but also activated inflammatory pathways, further promoting the development of pancreatitis [21].

Additionally, obesity was frequently associated with metabolic syndrome, the cluster of conditions including insulin resistance, hyperglycemia, hypertension, and dyslipidemia. Insulin resistance, in particular, was linked to increased pancreatic fat deposition, contributing to the condition known as fatty pancreas or pancreatic steatosis [22]. Pancreatic steatosis was characterized by the infiltration of fat into the pancreas, leading to structural and functional changes that predisposed the gland to inflammation and subsequent pancreatitis. The oxidative stress generated by the excessive fatty infiltration further perpetuated the inflammatory response [23].

The role of adipokines, hormones secreted by adipose tissue, was also noteworthy. Leptin and adiponectin, two key adipokines, had opposing effects on inflammation. In obesity, leptin levels were elevated while adiponectin levels were reduced. Leptin promoted inflammation and fibrosis within the pancreas, while adiponectin had anti-inflammatory and protective effects [24]. The imbalance between these adipokines in obesity skewed the pancreatic environment towards a pro-inflammatory state, facilitating the onset of pancreatitis.

Moreover, obesity-related comorbidities, such as gallstone disease and type 2 diabetes, further compounded the risk of pancreatitis. Gallstones, often associated with obesity, could obstruct the pancreatic duct, leading to pancreatic enzyme activation and subsequent inflammation. Type 2 diabetes, considered by serious hyperglycemia and insulin resistance, exacerbated inflammatory processes and oxidative stress within the pancreas, thereby increasing the susceptibility to pancreatitis [25].

In summary, connection among excess body weight and expansion of pancreatitis was multifaceted, involving very complex interplay of endocrine, metabolic, and inflammatory aspects. Adipose tissue, through the secretion of pro-inflammatory cytokines and adipokines, played a central role in creating a systemic inflammatory state that predisposed individuals to pancreatic inflammation. Alterations in lipid metabolism and the presence of obesity-related comorbidities further exacerbated this risk. Understanding these mechanisms highlighted the

importance of managing body weight and metabolic health in preventing pancreatitis and mitigating its severity in affected individuals.

CONCLUSION:

The study concluded that excess body weight was significantly related through an enlarged danger of developing pancreatitis. The mechanisms identified included pro-inflammatory effects of adipose tissue, which releases cytokines and adipokines that can trigger and sustain inflammation in the pancreas. Additionally, excess fat around the pancreas itself was found to contribute to local inflammation and tissue damage. Those results underscore significance of preserving very healthy weight to decrease danger of pancreatitis and highlight the need for further research into targeted interventions to mitigate the inflammatory effects of excess adipose tissue on pancreatic health.

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