

Cover: Desophagus epithelium. Coloured scanning electron micrograph (SEM) of the epithelium (lining) of the oesophagus. The irregularly-shaped epithelial cells (blue 6 yellow) have a highly folded surface. These tirry folds are called micropicae. The flatened cells form a stratified squamous epithelium many layers thick. As a mascular on-absorptive tube, the oesophagus transfers swallowed food to the stomach. The micropicae keep the oesophagus moist, trap mucus to lubricate passing food and protect the epithelium from food abrasion. Magnification unknown. Credit: STEVE GSCHMEISSNER / SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY.

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Contents

Volume 60 Issue 6 | GUT June 2011

Commentaries

741 Does it all ADA up? Adalimumab for ulcerative colitis

S Travis

742 Mesenchymal stem cell therapy of Crohn's disease: are the far-away hills getting closer? I Panés, D Benitez-Ribas, A Salas

745 NAFLD and extrahepatic cancers: have a look at the colon

H Tilg, A M Diehl

Guidelines

747 EGILS consensus report. Gastric extranodal marginal zone B-cell lymphoma of MALT A Ruskoné-Fourmestraux, W Fischbach, B M P Aleman, H Boot, M Q Du, F Megraud, C Montalban, M Raderer, A Savio, A Wotherspoon, on behalf of the EGILS group

Leading article

759 Transient elastography in chronic viral hepatitis: a critical appraisal

A-C Cardoso, R J Carvalho-Filho, P Marcellin

Oesophagus

765 Stepwise radical endoscopic resection versus radiofrequency ablation for Barrett's oesophagus with high-grade dysplasia or early cancer: a multicentre randomised trial F G I van Vilsteren, R E Pouw, S Seewald, L Alvarez Herrero, C M T Sondermeijer, M Visser, F I W ten Kate, K C Yu Kim Teng, N Soehendra, T Rösch, B L A M Weusten, I I G H M Bergman

Stomach

774 Diabetes conveys a higher risk of gastric cancer mortality despite an age-standardised decreasing trend in the general population in Taiwan

C-H Tseng

Inflammatory bowel disease

780 Adalimumab for induction of clinical remission in moderately to severely active ulcerative colitis: results of a randomised controlled trial

W Reinisch, W J Sandborn, D W Hommes, G D'Haens, S Hanauer, S Schreiber, R Panaccione, R N Fedorak, M B Tighe, B Huang, W Kampman, A Lazar, R Thakkar

Autologous bone marrow-derived mesenchymal stromal cells in the treatment of fistulising Crohn's disease

> R Ciccocioppo, M E Bernardo, A Sgarella, R Maccario, M A Avanzini, C Ubezio, A Minelli, C Alvisi, A Vanoli, F Calliada, P Dionigi, C Perotti, F Locatelli, G R Corazza

Colon

799

Common variant in 6g26-g27 is associated with distal colon cancer in an Asian population R Cui, Y Okada, S G Jang, J L Ku, J G Park,

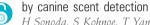
Y Kamatani, N Hosono, T Tsunoda, V Kumar, C Tanikawa, N Kamatani, R Yamada, M Kubo, Y Nakamura, K Matsuda

Thirty-day postoperative mortality after colorectal cancer surgery in England

E J A Morris, E F Taylor, J D Thomas, P Quirke, P J Finan, M P Coleman, B Rachet, D Forman



814 Colorectal cancer screening with odour material





Pancreas

820 Reg4 protects against acinar cell necrosis in experimental pancreatitis

G Hu, J Shen, L Cheng, C Guo, X Xu, F Wang, L Huang, L Yang, M He, D Xiang, S Zhu, M Wu, Y Yu, W Han, X Wang

MORE CONTENTS ▶



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Hepatology

829 High prevalence of colorectal neoplasm in patients with non-alcoholic steatohepatitis

> V W-S Wong, G L-H Wong, S W-C Tsang, T Fan, W C-W Chu, J Woo, A W-H Chan, P C-L Choi, A M-L Chim, J Y-W Lau, F K-L Chan, J J-Y Sung, H L-Y Chan

Predicting spontaneous clearance of acute hepatitis C virus in a large cohort of HIV-1infected men

> E C Thomson, V M Fleming, J Main, P Klenerman, J Weber, J Eliahoo, J Smith, M O McClure, P Karayiannis

846 Short- and long-term effects of the transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt on portal vein thrombosis in patients with

> A Luca, R Miraglia, S Caruso, M Milazzo, C Sapere, L Maruzzelli, G Vizzini, F Tuzzolino, B Gridelli, J Bosch

853 Portal cholangiopathy: radiological classification and natural history

> E Llop, C de Juan, S Seijo, Á García-Criado, J G Abraldes, J Bosch, I C García-Pagán

Recent advances in basic science

Stromal biology and therapy in pancreatic cancer

> A Neesse, P Michl, K K Frese, C Feig, N Cook, M A Jacobetz, M P Lolkema, M Buchholz, K P Olive, T M Gress, D A Tuveson

Recent advances in clinical practice

Management of achalasia: surgery or pneumatic dilation

J E Richter, G E Boeckxstaens

PostScript

877 Book review

877 Letters

Editor's quiz: GI snapshot

Unexplained gastrointestinal dysmotility: the clue may lie in the brain

> A Parry-Jones, P Paine, R Ramdass, N Townsend, R Hammonds, A Teubner, J Shaffer, P Cooper, S Lal

773 An unusual case of chronic blood loss in the small intestine

> G Wurm Johansson, A Nemeth, J Nielsen, H Thorlacius, E Toth

You can't have your cake and eat it too S D J Gibbs, S M Williams, X Tyler, J Pearson, M J Bennie, K M Bowles