**Protocol for the Examination of Specimens From Patients With Carcinoma of the Pancreas**

**Version:** 4.2.0.0  
**Protocol Posting Date:** June 2021  
**CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program Protocol Required Use Date:** March 2022

The changes included in this current protocol version affect accreditation requirements. The new deadline for implementing this protocol version is reflected in the above accreditation date.

For accreditation purposes, this protocol should be used for the following procedures AND tumor types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resection</td>
<td>Includes specimens designated pancreatectomy, partial or total, and pancreaticoduodenectomy (Whipple resection)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tumor Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carcinoma</td>
<td>Invasive carcinomas including small cell and large cell (poorly differentiated) neuroendocrine carcinoma.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This protocol is NOT required for accreditation purposes for the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biopsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enucleation (excisional biopsy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary resection specimen with no residual cancer (eg, following neoadjuvant therapy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cytologic specimens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following tumor types should NOT be reported using this protocol:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tumor Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm without associated invasive carcinoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucinous cystic neoplasm without associated invasive carcinoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-differentiated neuroendocrine tumor (consider Pancreas Endocrine protocol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ampullary tumors (consider Ampulla of Vater protocol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphoma (consider the Hodgkin or non-Hodgkin Lymphoma protocols)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcoma (consider the Soft Tissue protocol)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Authors**  
Lawrence J. Burgart, MD*; William V. Chopp, MD*; Dhanpat Jain, MD*.

With guidance from the CAP Cancer and CAP Pathology Electronic Reporting Committees.  
* Denotes primary author.
Accreditation Requirements
This protocol can be utilized for a variety of procedures and tumor types for clinical care purposes. For accreditation purposes, only the definitive primary cancer resection specimen is required to have the core and conditional data elements reported in a synoptic format.

- **Core data elements** are required in reports to adequately describe appropriate malignancies. For accreditation purposes, essential data elements must be reported in all instances, even if the response is “not applicable” or “cannot be determined.”
- **Conditional data elements** are only required to be reported if applicable as delineated in the protocol. For instance, the total number of lymph nodes examined must be reported, but only if nodes are present in the specimen.
- **Optional data elements** are identified with “+” and although not required for CAP accreditation purposes, may be considered for reporting as determined by local practice standards.

The use of this protocol is not required for recurrent tumors or for metastatic tumors that are resected at a different time than the primary tumor. Use of this protocol is also not required for pathology reviews performed at a second institution (ie, secondary consultation, second opinion, or review of outside case at second institution).

Synoptic Reporting
All core and conditionally required data elements outlined on the surgical case summary from this cancer protocol must be displayed in synoptic report format. Synoptic format is defined as:

- Data element: followed by its answer (response), outline format without the paired Data element: Response format is NOT considered synoptic.
- The data element should be represented in the report as it is listed in the case summary. The response for any data element may be modified from those listed in the case summary, including “Cannot be determined” if appropriate.
- Each diagnostic parameter pair (Data element: Response) is listed on a separate line or in a tabular format to achieve visual separation. The following exceptions are allowed to be listed on one line:
  - Anatomic site or specimen, laterality, and procedure
  - Pathologic Stage Classification (pTNM) elements
  - Negative margins, as long as all negative margins are specifically enumerated where applicable
- The synoptic portion of the report can appear in the diagnosis section of the pathology report, at the end of the report or in a separate section, but all Data element: Responses must be listed together in one location.

Organizations and pathologists may choose to list the required elements in any order, use additional methods in order to enhance or achieve visual separation, or add optional items within the synoptic report. The report may have required elements in a summary format elsewhere in the report IN ADDITION TO but not as replacement for the synoptic report ie, all required elements must be in the synoptic portion of the report in the format defined above.

Summary of Changes

v 4.2.0.0

- General Reformatting
- Revised Margins Section
- Revised Lymph Nodes Section
- Added Distant Metastasis Section
- Removed pTX and pNX Staging Classification
- Reformatted Treatment Effect
- Reformatted Sites Involved by Direct Tumor Extension
Reporting Template

Protocol Posting Date: June 2021
Select a single response unless otherwise indicated.

CASE SUMMARY: (PANCREAS (EXOCRINE))
Standard(s): AJCC-UICC 8

SPECIMEN (Note A)

Procedure
___ Excisional biopsy (enucleation)
___ Pancreaticoduodenectomy (Whipple resection), partial pancreatectomy
___ Total pancreatectomy
___ Partial pancreatectomy, pancreatic body
___ Partial pancreatectomy, pancreatic tail
___ Other (specify): ____________________
___ Not specified

TUMOR

Tumor Site (Note B) (select all that apply)
___ Pancreatic head: ____________________
___ Uncinate process: _________________
___ Pancreatic body: _________________
___ Pancreatic tail: ____________________
___ Other (specify): _________________
___ Cannot be determined: ________________
___ Not specified

Histologic Type (Note C)

Ductal Adenocarcinoma
___ Ductal adenocarcinoma (NOS)
___ Colloid carcinoma (mucinous noncystic carcinoma)
___ Signet-ring cell carcinoma (poorly cohesive carcinoma)
___ Intraductal papillary-mucinous neoplasm with an associated invasive carcinoma
___ Intraductal oncocytic papillary neoplasm with associated invasive carcinoma
___ Intraductal papillary neoplasm with an associated invasive carcinoma
___ Mucinous cystic neoplasm with an associated invasive carcinoma
___ Medullary carcinoma
___ Adenosquamous carcinoma
___ Hepatoid carcinoma
___ Large cell carcinoma with rhabdoid phenotype
___ Undifferentiated carcinoma
___ Undifferentiated carcinoma with osteoclast-like giant cells

Acinar Cell Carcinoma
___ Acinar cell carcinoma (NOS)
___ Acinar cell cystadenocarcinoma
___ Mixed acinar-neuroendocrine carcinoma
___ Mixed ductal-neuroendocrine carcinoma
___ Mixed acinar-endocrine-ductal carcinoma
___ Mixed acinar-ductal carcinoma

Other
___ Pancreatoblastoma
___ Solid-pseudopapillary neoplasm
___ Solid-pseudopapillary neoplasm with high grade carcinoma
___ Large cell neuroendocrine carcinoma
___ Small cell neuroendocrine carcinoma
___ Mixed neuroendocrine-non-neuroendocrine neoplasm
___ Other histologic type not listed (specify): _______________________

+Histologic Type Comment: _______________________

Histologic Grade (ductal carcinoma only) (Note D)
___ Not applicable
___ G1, well differentiated
___ G2, moderately differentiated
___ G3, poorly differentiated
___ Other (specify): _______________________
___ GX, cannot be assessed: _______________________

Tumor Size
___ Greatest dimension in Centimeters (cm): ________________ cm
   +Additional Dimension in Centimeters (cm): ____ x _____ cm
___ Cannot be determined (explain): _______________________

Site(s) Involved by Direct Tumor Extension (select all that apply)
___ No invasion (carcinoma in situ / high-grade dysplasia, including pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasia III)
___ Confined to pancreas
   +Pancreatic Surface Involvement (select all that apply)
      ___ Posterior surface
      ___ Anterior surface
      ___ Vascular bed / groove (corresponding to superior mesenteric vein / portal vein)
      ___ Ampulla of Vater or sphincter of Oddi
      ___ Duodenal wall
      ___ Peripancreatic soft tissues
      ___ Retroperitoneal soft tissue
      ___ Mesenteric adipose tissue
      ___ Mesocolon
      ___ Other peripancreatic soft tissue (specify): _______________________
      ___ Extrapancreatic common bile duct
      ___ Stomach
      ___ Superior mesenteric vein
      ___ Portal vein
      ___ Celiac axis
      ___ Superior mesenteric artery
      ___ Common hepatic artery
      ___ Other adjacent organ(s) or structure(s): _______________________
      ___ Cannot be determined: _______________________
___ No evidence of primary tumor
Treatment Effect (Note E)
___ No known presurgical therapy
___ Present, with no viable cancer cells (complete response, score 0)
___ Present, with single cells or rare small groups of cancer cells (near complete response, score 1)
___ Present, with residual cancer showing evident tumor regression, but more than single cells or rare small groups of cancer cells (partial response, score 2)
___ Present (not otherwise specified)
___ Absent, with extensive residual cancer and no evident tumor regression (poor or no response, score 3)
___ Cannot be determined: ______________________

Lymphovascular Invasion (Note F)
___ Not identified
___ Present
___ Cannot be determined: ______________________

Perineural Invasion (Note G)
___ Not identified
___ Present
___ Cannot be determined: ______________________

+Tumor Comment: ______________________

MARGINS (Note H)

Margin Status for Invasive Carcinoma
___ All margins negative for invasive carcinoma
+Closest Margin(s) to Invasive Carcinoma (select all that apply)
___ Proximal pancreatic parenchymal: ______________________
___ Distal pancreatic parenchymal: ______________________
___ Pancreatic neck / parenchymal: ______________________
___ Uncinate (retroperitoneal / superior mesenteric artery): ______________________
___ Bile duct: ______________________
___ Proximal (gastric or duodenal): ______________________
___ Distal (duodenal or jejunal): ______________________
___ Other (specify): ______________________
___ Cannot be determined: ______________________
+Distance from Invasive Carcinoma to Closest Margin
Specify in Centimeters (cm)
___ Exact distance in cm: ______________________ cm
___ Greater than 1 cm
Specify in Millimeters (mm)
___ Exact distance in mm: ______________________ mm
___ Greater than 10 mm
Other
___ Other (specify): ______________________
___ Cannot be determined: ______________________
___ Invasive carcinoma present at margin
Margin(s) Involved by Invasive Carcinoma (select all that apply)
___ Proximal pancreatic parenchymal: ______________________
___ Distal pancreatic parenchymal: ___________________
___ Pancreatic neck / parenchymal: ___________________
___ Uncinate (retroperitoneal / superior mesenteric artery): ___________________
___ Bile duct: ___________________
___ Proximal (gastric or duodenal): ___________________
___ Distal (duodenal or jejunal): ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined: ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined (explain): ___________________
___ Not applicable

Margin Status for Dysplasia and Intraepithelial Neoplasia (select all that apply)
___ All margins negative for dysplasia and intraepithelial neoplasia
___ Pancreatic high-grade intraepithelial neoplasia present at margin

Margin(s) Involved by Pancreatic High-Grade Intraepithelial Neoplasia (select all that apply)
___ Proximal pancreatic parenchymal: ___________________
___ Distal pancreatic parenchymal: ___________________
___ Pancreatic neck / parenchymal: ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined: ___________________
___ High-grade intraepithelial neoplasia present at bile duct margin: ___________________
___ High-grade dysplasia present at margin

Margin(s) Involved by High-Grade Dysplasia (select all that apply)
___ Proximal (gastric or duodenal): ___________________
___ Distal (duodenal or jejunal): ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined: ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined (explain): ___________________
___ Not applicable

+Margin Comment: ___________________

REGIONAL LYMPH NODES

Regional Lymph Node Status
___ Not applicable (no regional lymph nodes submitted or found)
___ Regional lymph nodes present
___ All regional lymph nodes negative for tumor
___ Tumor present in regional lymph node(s)

Number of Lymph Nodes with Tumor
___ Exact number (specify): ___________________
___ At least (specify): ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined (explain): ___________________
___ Other (specify): ___________________
___ Cannot be determined (explain): ___________________

Number of Lymph Nodes Examined
___ Exact number (specify): ___________________
At least (specify): ____________________
Other (specify): ____________________
Cannot be determined (explain): _________________

Regional Lymph Node Comment: _________________

DISTANT METASTASIS

Distant Site(s) Involved, if applicable (select all that apply)
Not applicable
Non-regional lymph node(s): _________________
Liver: _________________
Other (specify): _________________
Cannot be determined: _________________

PATHOLOGIC STAGE CLASSIFICATION (pTNM, AJCC 8th Edition) (Note 1)
Reporting of pT, pN, and (when applicable) pM categories is based on information available to the pathologist at the time the report is issued. As per the AJCC (Chapter 1, 8th Ed.) it is the managing physician’s responsibility to establish the final pathologic stage based upon all pertinent information, including but potentially not limited to this pathology report.

TNM Descriptors (select all that apply)
Not applicable
m (multiple primary tumors)
r (recurrent)
y (post-treatment)

PT Category#
PT not assigned (cannot be determined based on available pathological information)
Size of invasive component should be used for determining the T category.
PT0: No evidence of primary tumor
PTis: Carcinoma in situ (This includes high-grade pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasia (PanIN-3), intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia, intraductal tubulopapillary neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia, and mucinous cystic neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia.)
PT1: Tumor less than or equal to 2 cm or less in greatest dimension
PT1a: Tumor less than or equal to 0.5 cm in greatest dimension
PT1b: Tumor greater than 0.5 cm and less than 1 cm in greatest dimension
PT1c: Tumor 1-2 cm in greatest dimension
PT1 (subcategory cannot be determined)
PT2: Tumor greater than 2 cm and less than equal to 4 cm in greatest dimension
PT3: Tumor greater than 4 cm in greatest dimension
PT4: Tumor involves the celiac axis or the superior mesenteric artery, and / or common hepatic artery, regardless of size

PN Category
PN not assigned (no nodes submitted or found)
PN not assigned (cannot be determined based on available pathological information)
PN0: No regional lymph node metastasis
PN1: Metastasis in one to three regional lymph nodes
PN2: Metastasis in four or more regional lymph nodes

PM Category (required only if confirmed pathologically)
___ Not applicable - pM cannot be determined from the submitted specimen(s)
___ pM1: Distant metastasis

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS (Note J)

+Additional Findings (select all that apply)
___ None identified
___ Pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasia (PanIN) (specify highest grade): _________________
___ Chronic pancreatitis
___ Acute pancreatitis
___ Other (specify): _________________

SPECIAL STUDIES

+Ancillary Studies (Note K) (specify): _________________

COMMENTS

Comment(s): _________________
Explanatory Notes

A. Tumors
This protocol applies to epithelial tumors of the exocrine pancreas. It excludes endocrine tumors and tumors of the ampulla of Vater. More than 90% to 95% of malignant tumors of the pancreas are exocrine carcinomas. For these tumors, surgical resection remains the only potentially curative approach, and the prognosis is primarily dependent on the anatomic extent of disease and performance status.

B. Definition of Location
The anatomic subdivisions defining location of tumors of the pancreas (Figure 1) are as follows:
- Tumors of the head of the pancreas are those arising to the right of the left border of the superior mesenteric vein. The uncinate process is part of the head.
- Tumors of the body of the pancreas are those arising between the left border of the superior mesenteric vein and the left border of the aorta.
- Tumors of the tail of the pancreas are those arising between the left border of the aorta and the hilum of the spleen.

Figure 1. Anatomic subsites of the pancreas. From Greene et al. Used with permission of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), Chicago, Illinois. The original source for this material is the AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas (2006) published by Springer Science and Business Media LLC, www.springerlink.com.

References

C. Histologic Type
A classification of malignant epithelial tumors of the exocrine pancreas recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), however; this protocol does not preclude the use of other histologic types or systems of classification.
References

D. Histopathologic Grade
For adenocarcinomas, a histologic grade based on the extent of glandular differentiation is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Cannot be assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Well-differentiated (greater than 95% of tumor composed of glands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moderately differentiated (50% to 95% of tumor composed of glands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poorly differentiated (49% or less of tumor composed of glands)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certain histologic subtypes, including acinar cell carcinoma, acinar cell cystadenocarcinoma, serous cystadenocarcinoma, and solid-pseudopapillary neoplasm, are not assigned a grade. By convention, signet-ring cell carcinomas are assigned grade 3. Undifferentiated carcinomas lack morphologic or immunohistochemical evidence of glandular, squamous, or neuroendocrine differentiation. This grading scheme is not applicable to poorly differentiated neuroendocrine carcinomas.

For pancreatic ductal carcinoma, histologic grade has been shown to have prognostic significance, with high grade (grade 3) being an unfavorable prognostic factor. Kloeppel grading scheme uses a combination of glandular differentiation, mucin production, mitoses, and nuclear pleomorphism. No differences in predictive value have been demonstrated in comparisons between the Klöppel grading system and the grading system based on glandular differentiation alone. Other systems based on patterns of infiltration of predominant and secondary tumor patterns have been proposed but have not been widely adopted.

References

E. Treatment Effect
Response of tumor to previous chemotherapy or radiation therapy should be reported. Several scoring systems have been described, and a modified Ryan scheme is recommended, as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modified Ryan Scheme for Tumor Regression Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No viable cancer cells (complete response)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single cells or rare small groups of cancer cells (near complete response)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual cancer with evident tumor regression, but more than single cells or rare small groups of cancer cells (partial response)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive residual cancer with no evident tumor regression (poor or no response)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sizable pools of acellular mucin may be present after chemoradiation but should not be interpreted as representing residual tumor. The size of the viable tumor should be used to assign the ypT category and requires a combined assessment of gross and microscopic findings. Multiple foci of viable tumor within the same tumor mass can be added to obtain the maximum linear dimension for staging.
This protocol does not preclude the use of other systems for assessment of tumor response. A modification of the above scoring scheme into a 3-tier scheme has been shown to correlate better with outcome: no residual carcinoma (grade 0), minimal residual carcinoma defined as single cells or small groups of cancer cells, <5% residual carcinoma (grade 1), 5% or more residual carcinoma (grade 2).

References

F. Venous/Lymphatic Vessel Invasion
Venous as well as lymphatic (small vessel) invasion has been shown to be an adverse prognostic factor.

References

G. Perineural Invasion
Perineural invasion has been shown to be an adverse prognostic factor.

References

H. Margins
The nonperitonealized surface of the uncinate process (uncinate margin) constitutes the inferior-posterior retroperitoneal margin of pancreaticoduodenectomy specimens (Figure 2) and should be inked; sections through the tumor at its closest approach to this margin should be submitted. This margin has also been referred to as retroperitoneal margin and superior mesenteric artery margin.
Because local recurrences of invasive pancreatic adenocarcinoma arise in the pancreatic bed corresponding to the uncinate margin and vascular groove of, Inking of the vascular groove corresponding to portal and superior mesenteric veins and submission of sections through the tumor at its closest approach to this surface is recommended. Reporting of tumor involvement of anterior and non-uncinate posterior surfaces is recommended, but not required. The vascular groove, anterior surface and the non-uncinate posterior surface are not considered as resection margins.

When dealing with an intraductal tumor, the pancreatic (neck/parenchymal) resection margin and the common bile duct margin (Whipple resection) are the most critical. Complete en face sections through the pancreatic resection margin and the common bile duct margin should be taken. The presence of tumor at or within 1 mm of resection margin constitutes a positive margin. Margin status can be reported as negative (R0, no residual disease), R1 (positive, microscopic residual disease) and R2 (positive, macroscopic residual disease).

References

I. Pathologic Stage Classification
The TNM staging system for carcinoma of the exocrine pancreas of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) is recommended and shown
The postresection prognosis of a patient with pancreatic carcinoma is primarily determined by the anatomic extent of disease as defined by the TNM stage groupings.

According to AJCC/UICC convention, the designation “T” refers to a primary tumor that has not been previously treated. The symbol “p” refers to the pathologic classification of the TNM, as opposed to the clinical classification, and is based on gross and microscopic examination. pT entails a resection of the primary tumor or biopsy adequate to evaluate the highest pT category, pN entails removal of nodes adequate to validate lymph node metastasis, and pM implies microscopic examination of distant lesions. Clinical classification (cTNM) is usually carried out by the referring physician before treatment during initial evaluation of the patient or when pathologic classification is not possible.

Pathologic staging is usually performed after surgical resection of the primary tumor. Pathologic staging depends on pathologic documentation of the anatomic extent of disease, whether or not the primary tumor has been completely removed. If a biopsied tumor is not resected for any reason (eg, when technically infeasible) and if the highest T and N categories or the M1 category of the tumor can be confirmed microscopically, the criteria for pathologic classification and staging have been satisfied without total removal of the primary cancer.

**TNM Descriptors**

For identification of special cases of TNM or pTNM classifications, the “m” suffix and “y,” “r,” and “a” prefixes are used. Although they do not affect the stage grouping, they indicate cases needing separate analysis.

The “m” suffix indicates the presence of multiple primary tumors in a single site and is recorded in parentheses: pT(m)NM.

The “y” prefix indicates those cases in which classification is performed during or after initial multimodality therapy (ie, neoadjuvant chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or both chemotherapy and radiation therapy). The cTNM or pTNM category is identified by a “y” prefix. The ycTNM or ypTNM categorizes the extent of tumor actually present at the time of that examination. The “y” categorization is not an estimate of tumor before multimodality therapy (ie, before initiation of neoadjuvant therapy).

The “r” prefix indicates a recurrent tumor when staged after a documented disease-free interval and is identified by the “r” prefix: rTNM.

The “a” prefix designates the stage determined at autopsy: aTNM.

**Vessel Invasion**

According to AJCC/UICC convention, vessel invasion (lymphatic or venous) does not affect the T category indicating local extent of tumor unless specifically included in the definition of a T category.

**T Category Considerations** (Figures 3 and 4)

If more than 1 tumor is present in the pancreas, the tumor with the highest T category should be classified according to the pT definitions and either the multiplicity (“m”) or the actual number of simultaneous multiple tumors (eg, “3”) should be indicated in parentheses after the T category of the primary tumor (eg, pT3[m] or pT3[2]).

This applies only to grossly recognizable, synchronous primary carcinomas and not to a single, grossly detected tumor with multiple separate microscopic foci.
Tis includes high-grade pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasia (PanIn-3), intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia, intraductal tubulopapillary neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia and mucinous cystic neoplasm with high-grade dysplasia.

The T categories T1-T3 are defined by tumor size as it provides better prognostic stratification than classification based on extension into peripancreatic tissue. Tumor size is determined by measurement of the gross lesion and should be corroborated on microscopic assessment. For invasive carcinoma associated with intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms, intraductal tubulopapillary neoplasms and mucinous cystic neoplasms, only the size of the invasive component should be used to determine the T category. The synoptic report is not required for intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms, intraductal tubulopapillary neoplasms and mucinous cystic neoplasms in the absence of an invasive component. The invasive portion in these cases can be multifocal. It is currently not clear whether size of the largest tumor focus or combined size of all invasive foci determines tumor outcome. Both measurements can be included in the pathology report, and the maximum linear dimension of the largest invasive focus is used for staging.

Extension beyond the pancreas may include invasion of peripancreatic soft tissue, peritoneum (including mesocolon, greater/lesser omentum), extrapancreatic biliary system, and/or duodenum (including the ampulla of Vater) for pancreatic head tumors, while stomach, spleen, left adrenal, and peritoneum can be involved by direct extension of body/tail tumors. Tumor extension in these areas does not affect staging, but should be noted in the pathology report. Invasion of the portal vein does not affect staging, but has been shown to be an independent prognostic factor. T4 tumors are characterized by involvement of superior mesenteric artery, celiac axis and/or common hepatic artery. In most instances, these tumors are considered unresectable and hence T4 category is determined by radiologic studies and is not usually assigned by pathologists.

Figure 3. T1 (left of dotted line) is defined as tumor measuring 2 cm or less in greatest dimension and limited to the pancreas. T2 (right of dotted line) is defined as tumor measuring more than 2 cm in greatest dimension and less than 4 cm in greatest dimension. From Greene et al. Used with permission of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), Chicago, Illinois. The original source for this material is the AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas (2006) published by Springer Science and Business Media LLC, www.springerlink.com.
Figure 4. T4 tumor involves the celiac axis (above dotted line) or the superior mesenteric artery (below dotted line). T4 tumors are considered unresectable and are rarely encountered in surgical pathology specimens. From Greene et al. Used with permission of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), Chicago, Illinois. The original source for this material is the *AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas* (2006) published by Springer Science and Business Media LLC, [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

**N Category Considerations**

The regional lymph nodes for head and neck cancers include lymph nodes along common bile duct, common hepatic artery, portal vein, pyloric, anterior and posterior pancreaticoduodenal arcades, superior mesenteric vein and right lateral wall of superior mesenteric artery (Figures 5 and 6). The regional lymph nodes for the pancreatic body and tail cancers include lymph nodes along common hepatic artery, celiac axis, splenic artery, and splenic hilum. Tumor involvement of other nodal groups is considered distant metastasis. Anatomic division of lymph nodes is not necessary, but separately submitted lymph nodes should be individually reported.

Lymph node metastasis is an independent adverse prognostic factor. Microscopic evaluation of at least 12 lymph nodes is recommended for Whipple resections. Based on outcome data, tumors with positive lymph nodes are now categorized as N1 or N2.

Figure 5. Regional lymph nodes of the pancreas (anterior view). From Greene et al. Used with permission of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), Chicago, Illinois. The original source for this material is the *AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas* (2006) published by Springer Science and Business Media LLC, [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).
Figure 6. Regional lymph nodes of the pancreas (anterior view with pancreatic body removed to reveal retroperitoneal vessels and lymph nodes). From Greene et al. Used with permission of the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), Chicago, Illinois. The original source for this material is the AJCC Cancer Staging Atlas (2006) published by Springer Science and Business Media LLC, www.springerlink.com.

M Category Considerations
Peritoneal seeding or positive peritoneal cytology is considered M1.18

References

J. Additional Findings
Pancreatic Intraepithelial Neoplasia (PanIN)
Noninvasive lesions of the ductal epithelium often are found in the pancreatic parenchyma surrounding ductal adenocarcinoma. These lesions are collectively known as pancreatic intraepithelial neoplasia (PanIN). PanINs were previously classified into 3 grades. The most recent consensus recommends a 2-tier grading scheme for better reproducibility and for better alignment of the grades with treatment options. A similar 2-tier scheme is recommended for noninvasive MCN and intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm (IPMN).

Normal
Nonmucinous flattened or cuboidal epithelium without dysplasia

PanIN, low grade
Includes flat mucinous epithelium without dysplasia (PanIN-1A), papillary mucinous epithelium without dysplasia (PanIN-1B) and flat or papillary mucinous epithelium with mild-to-moderate dysplasia featuring mild-to-moderate nuclear irregularity, hyperchromasia, and loss of polarity (PanIN-2)

PanIN, high grade
Flat or papillary mucinous epithelium with severe dysplasia (marked nuclear irregularity, hyperchromasia, and loss of polarity), often with cribriforming and intraluminal blebbing (budding off of noncohesive cells), corresponds to carcinoma in situ

High-grade PanIN at the resection margins of an otherwise completely resected malignancy should be noted in the pathology report. In this setting, the biologic significance of PanIN of any grade remains unclear. The presence of dysplasia at the margin of a noninvasive IPMN is also uncertain. The highest grade even if focal determines the final grade. For IPMN and MCN, the extent of high-grade dysplasia can be recorded, but does not currently have clinical relevance.

Other Findings
In addition to the examination of other tissues and organs that are part of pancreaticoduodenectomy specimens, pathologic evaluation may also include examination of the gastric antrum for gastritis (eg, Helicobacter pylori gastritis or chemical gastritis) and the duodenum for duodenitis, peptic ulcer disease, and ampullitis.

References