Pancreas divisum is the most common anatomic variant of pancreatic development and may lead to chronic pancreatitis [1,2]. Endoscopic stenting of the dorsal pancreatic duct is a safe and effective treatment for patients with chronic pancreatitis and pancreas divisum [3,4]. Here we report three cases of chronic pancreatitis and pancreas divisum successfully treated with endoscopic placement of a self-expanding metal stent (SEMS) in the minor papilla.

Between June 2005 and July 2006, three patients with chronic pancreatitis and pancreas divisum received a SEMS for relief of abdominal pain that was persisting despite several attempts at pancreatic plastic stent implantation (Wilson-Cook Medical GI Endoscopy, Winston-Salem, NC, USA). All patients received a covered pancreatic-type SEMS (Taewoong Medical Co., Seoul, South Korea), which was implanted into the minor papilla and the dorsal pancreatic duct using a standard technique with a duodenoscope (TJF-140 or TJF-160, Olympus Corp., Japan). All three endoscopic SEMS placements were successful and there were no complications relating to endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP). Interestingly, 6 months after implantation, both a plain abdominal radiograph and duodenoscopy showed that all three SEMS had passed spontaneously (\textit{Video 1}).

ERCP showed no new stones in the dorsal pancreatic duct and no further intervention was carried out. At a mean follow-up of 27 months (range 25–30 months), all patients were free of pain and none had steatorrhea or diabetes mellitus (\textit{Table 1}). The results of our pilot trial with three patients suggests that covered SEMS should be considered as an alternative to endoscopic management of chronic pancreatitis and pancreas divisum. Moreover, as all SEMS passed spontaneously through the minor papilla and dorsal pancreatic duct, further endoscopic extraction was not required.

Endoscopic_UCTN_Code_TTT_1AR_2AZ
Endoscopic_UCTN_Code_TTT_1AR_2AI

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Patient and stent data and pain scores.}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Patient & Age/sex & No. of sessions of PS placement & SEMS (diameter, length) & Pain score (VAS) & Follow-up (month) \\
\hline
 & & & & Pre-PS & Post-PS & After SEMS \\
\hline
1 & 58/M & 3 (7 F, 8.5 F, 10 F) & 8 mm, 30 mm & 8 & 7 & 0 & 30 \\
2 & 47/M & 2 (7 F, 8.5 F) & 8 mm, 30 mm & 7 & 6 & 0 & 26 \\
3 & 43/M & 3 (7 F, 8.5 F, 10 F) & 8 mm, 30 mm & 6 & 4 & 0 & 25 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

PS, plastic stent; F, French; SEMS, self-expandable metal stent; VAS, visual analog scale (0 = no pain; 10 = [imaginary] maximum pain).
Chronic Pancreatitis Study Group, Department of Gastroenterology, Digestive Endoscopy Center, Changhai Hospital, Second Military Medical University, China

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Endoscopy 2009; 41: E302–E303
© Georg Thieme Verlag KG Stuttgart · New York · ISSN 0013-726X

Corresponding author
Professor Z. S. Li
Department of Gastroenterology
Digestive Endoscopy Center
Changhai Hospital
Second Military Medical University
168 Changhai Road
Shanghai 200433
China
Fax: +86-21-55621735
zhaoshenli@hotmail.com