

Poor pathologist agreement for low-grade dysplasia in Barrett's

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(HealthDay)—There is poor agreement between pathologists in

diagnosis of low-grade dysplasia (LGD) in patients with Barrett's esophagus (BE), according to a study published in the February issue of *Gastroenterology*.

Prashanth Vennalaganti, M.D., from the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Kansas City, Mo., and colleagues discussed the [diagnostic criteria](#) for LGD and then reviewed 72 slides from patients with BE identified from seven [pathologists](#) (four from the United States and three from Europe). Slides included 23 samples of non-dysplastic BE, 22 LGD samples, and 34 high-grade dysplasia samples.

The researchers found that the overall κ value was 0.43 for diagnosis. The κ values were 0.22 for non-dysplastic BE, 0.11 for LGD, and 0.43 for high-grade dysplasia when categorized based on degree of dysplasia. The inter-observer agreement was considerable among the U.S. and European pathologists (κ , 0.63 and 0.80, respectively) when all pathologists made a diagnosis with high confidence. For all diagnoses, the κ values were higher for those made by European versus U.S. pathologists.

"In an analysis of criteria used in histopathologic [diagnosis](#) of LGD, we did not observe improvement in level of agreement among experienced pathologists, even after accounting for inflammation," the authors write. "The level of inter-observer [agreement](#) increased with level of pathologist confidence."

One author disclosed financial ties to the biopharmaceutical industry.

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