Extent of invasion (Core and Non-core)

The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)[1]/American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC)[2] 8th Edition Staging Manuals divide T stage into T1a and T1b. T1a refers to invasion into lamina propria or muscularis mucosae whereas T1b involves the submucosa. Thus, the depth of invasion which is the T staging criteria, must be recorded accurately.

It is also useful to measure the depth of invasion from the basement membrane of the epithelial layer and invasion to the submucosa (in mm).

In addition, the extent of invasion has been associated with lymphovascular invasion and recurrence. For both glandular and squamous malignancies, there are efforts to further subdivide the level of invasion. However, there is lack of multicentred studies to confirm the need of these subdivisions and to evaluate the best system to use.

The following systems are commonly employed and are provided as reference for optional use:

<u>For adenocarcinoma and high grade Barrett dysplasia</u>

In these malignancies, the Barrett muscularis mucosae is duplicated (Figures 4 and 6; Table 2).[2-5] There is a proposal to subdivide the involvement of muscularis mucosae into two classes as follows:

- Cannot be assessed
- High grade dysplasia (m1) Tis
- Invasion into lamina propria (m2, T1a)
- Invasion into muscularis mucosae (Inner duplicated layer) (m3, T1a)
- Invasion into muscularis mucosae (Outer duplicated layer) (m4, T1a)
- Invasion into submucosa (T1b)
- Invasion into muscularis propria (T2)

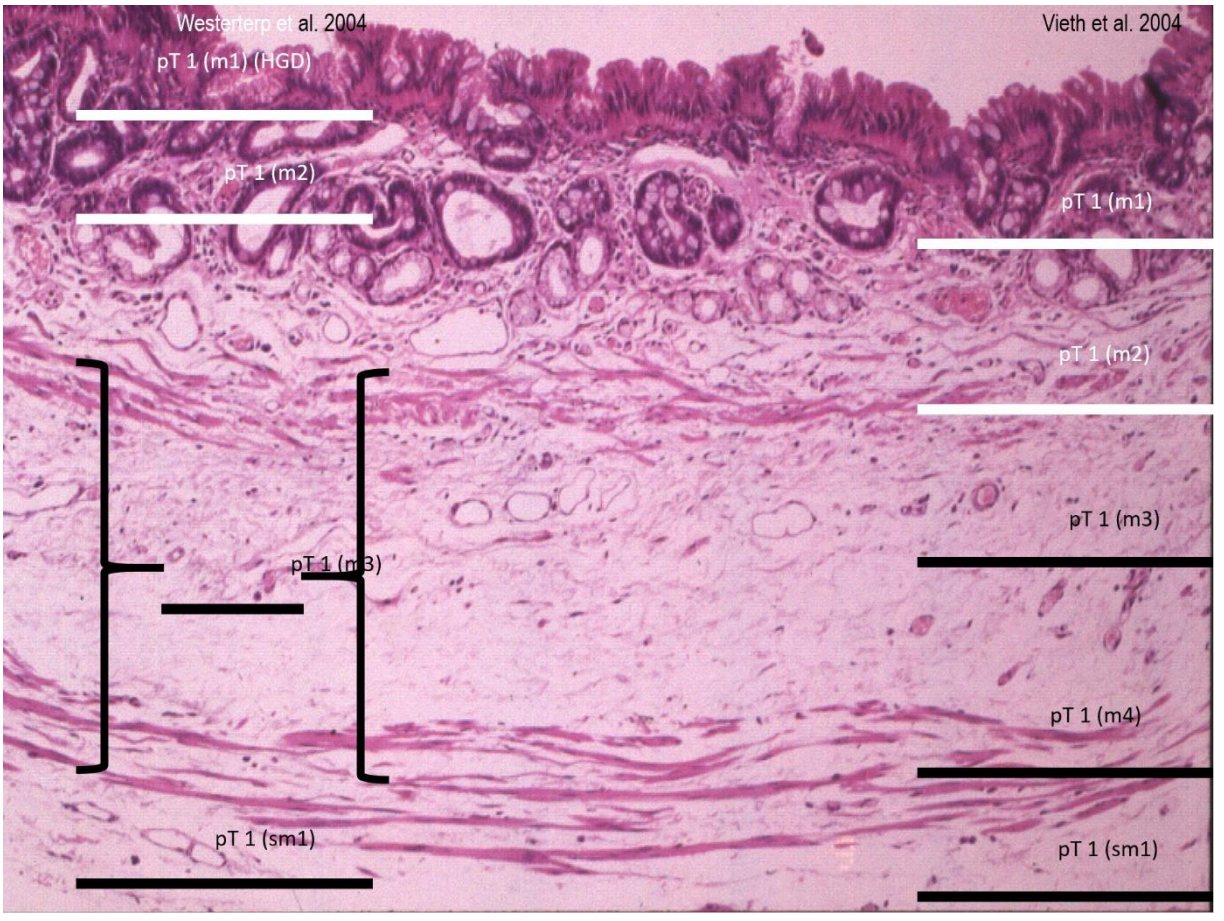

Figure 4: Subdivision of mucosal Barrett layer. Reproduced with permisson from Vieth et al (2012). Barrett oesophagus. Practical issues for daily routine diagnosis. *Pathology - Research and Practice* 208(5):261-268.[6]

Table 2: Intramucosal carcinoma (T1a) subclassification schemes.[2-5]

Depth of invasion	Vieth et al 2005[3]	Westerterp et al 2005[5]	Kaneshiro et al 2011[4]	AJCC 2017[2]
None - Tis, high grade dysplasia (HGD)	HGD	m1	HGD	Tis
Tumour cells invade into lamina propria (LP) beyond the basement membrane	m1	m2	LP	T1a
Tumour cells invade inner duplicated muscularis mucosae (IMM)	m2	m2	IMM	T1a
Tumour cells in the space between the duplicated muscularis mucosae and original muscularis mucosae, i.e., between muscularis mucosae (BMM)	m3	m2	BMM	T1a
Tumour cells into outer original muscularis mucosae (OMM)	m4	m3	OMM	T1a

For squamous cell carcinoma and high grade squamous dysplasia

For these malignancies, Japanese pathologists have proposed a different sub-division of levels of invasion as follows:

- T1a-EP
- T1a-LPM
- T1a-MM
- T1b-SM1
- T1b-SM2
- T1b-SM3

pT1 of intramucosal cancer is assessed in the three stages, including pT1-EP (epithelium), pT1a-LPM (lamina propria mucosae) and pT1a-MM (muscularis mucosae) (Figures 5 and 6).

When cancer remains in the mucosal layer, the depth of invasion is subclassified into three levels, pT1a-EP (cancer cells remain in the columnar epithelial layer), pT1a-LPM (cancer cells involve the lamina propria mucosae) and pT1a-MM (cancer cells invade the muscularis mucosae).

For cancer that invades the submucosa, the submucosa is divided into three equal parts to express the depth of invasion under microscopic observation - the top layer, middle layer, and bottom layer are pSM1, pSM2, and pSM3, respectively.

In a cancer that invades beyond the muscularis mucosae of an endoscopic resection (ER) case, the entire submucosal layer cannot be observed. Therefore, the depth of invasion from the lower end of the muscularis mucosae should be described using measured values. The subclassification of pT1b is pT1b-SM1 for cancer cell invasion up to 200 micrometres (µm) and pT1b-SM2 for cancer cell invasion exceeding 200 µm.

One of the rationales for this subdivision is that the risk of lymph node metastasis is shown to be related to the invasive depth for ER cases.[7,8]

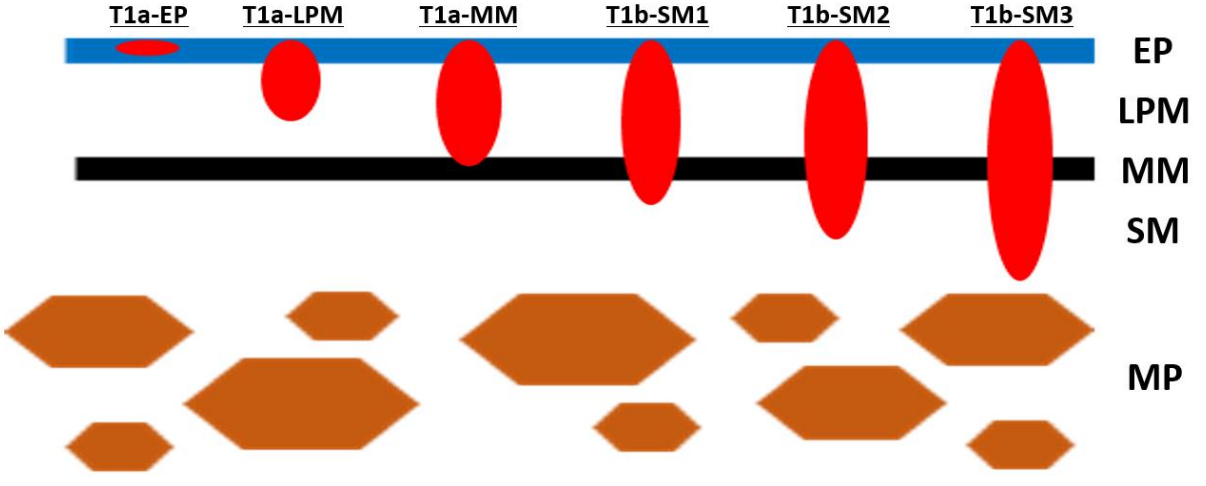

Figure 5: pT1 of intramucosal squamous cancer is assessed in the three stages: pT1-EP (epithelium), pT1a-LPM (lamina propria mucosae) and pT1a-MM (muscularis mucosae). The subclassification of pT1b is: pT1b-SM (submucosa) 1 for cancer cell invasion up to 200 µm and pT1b-SM2 for cancer cell invasion exceeding 200 µm; MP (muscularis propria). Modified with permission from Japan Esophageal Society (2017). Japanese Classification of Esophageal Cancer, 11th Edition: Part I. *Esophagus* 14:1–36.[9]

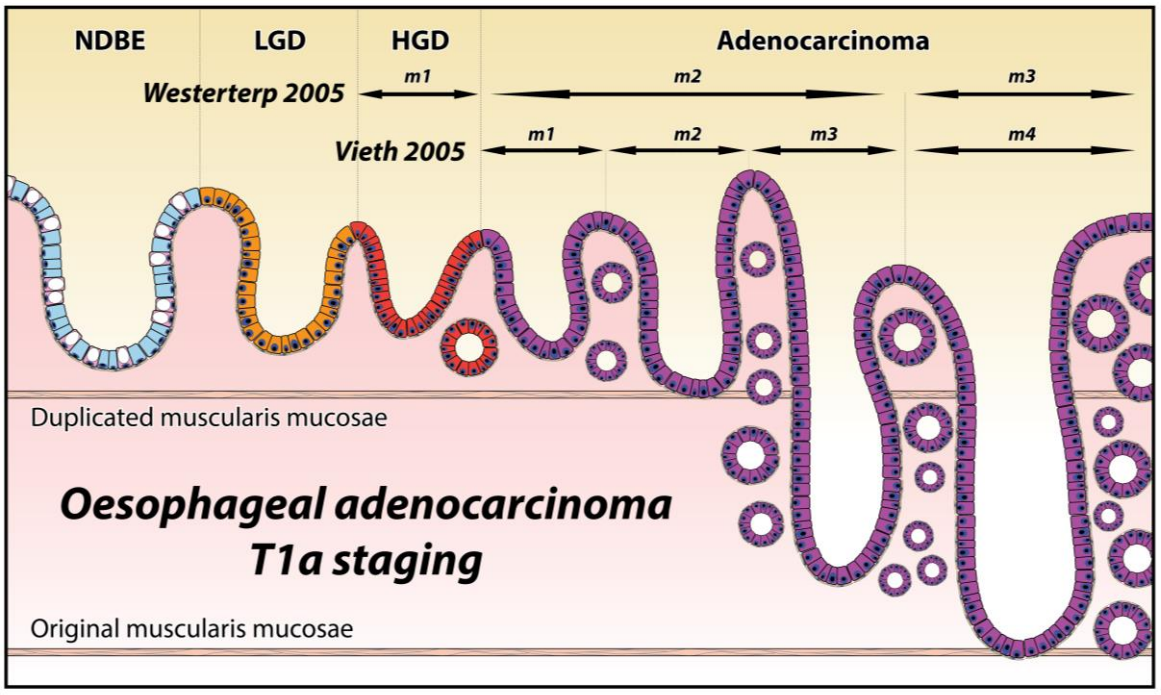

Figure 6: Histo-anatomical layers in oesophageal Barrett mucosa and adenocarcinoma (m1-m4). Permission courtesy of Dr Marnix Jansen.

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