

Title: Same Or Different? Resolution of Diagnostic Difficulty of Two Mixed Cell-Type Tumors in Ovarian Pathology.

Key Words: thecoma, adherent fallopian tube, cystadenoma, Brenner tumor

Abstract

When confronted by two disease processes, physicians in all disciplines are faced with the question: Are they manifestations of a common etiology “same”, or distinct entities co-occurring: “different”? Inherent in this dilemma is whether an aberration from normal is even a disease process at all. In this case report, we describe two patients, each with ovarian neoplasms having histopathological features of two tumors, causing confrontation of the dilemma of “same or different”? In these reports “same” implies it is one histopathological entity, while “different” denotes two different abnormal processes co-occurring. The evaluation of these cases illustrates methods in surgical pathology to resolve this conundrum.

One patient had a large ovarian neoplasm composed of admixed Brenner tumor and mucinous cystadenoma, a rare but well-documented combination of tumors. The second case was a very large ovarian mass composed of thecoma, a very rare tumor, as well as areas of serous cystadenoma-like growth, a combination of tumors only described in a few isolated case reports.

These cases illustrate various methodologies to ascertain whether two tumors are the same, different, or even represent a neoplasm and can shed light on how challenging diagnoses are worked up in the field of surgical pathology. This exercise, while of academic interest in the context of benign disease, is relevant to malignant tumors in which knowing if two tumors within the same patient are the same or different has a significant impact on staging and treatment selection.