

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-58749

Title: ROLE OF UMBILICAL BLOOD CULTURE IN DETECTION OF EARLY ONSET SEPSIS IN HIGH-RISK NEONATES.

Recommendation:

- Accept as it is
 ✓ Accept after minor revision.....
 Accept after major revision
 Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Dr S. K. Nath

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strength of the study:

1. The study addresses an important neonatal clinical problem.
2. The prospective observational design is appropriate for the research question.
3. Paired cord and peripheral blood cultures were collected.
4. Ethical approval and parental informed consent are reported.
5. Diagnostic accuracy measures are clearly presented.
6. The study identifies relevant neonatal risk factors.
7. The findings have potential practical value in neonatal care.

Weakness of the study:

1. The sample size is modest and the study is single center.
2. Peripheral venous culture is treated as the reference standard without discussing its limitations.
3. The definition of sepsis and culture positivity needs clearer explanation.
4. Some statistical comparisons are based on very small numbers.
5. The conclusion appears somewhat stronger than the available evidence.
6. Grammar and wording require careful editing.
7. Longer term clinical outcomes are not evaluated.

Reviewers Comments:

The manuscript addresses an important and clinically relevant question regarding the use of umbilical cord blood culture for early onset neonatal sepsis in high risk newborns. The paired sampling design and reporting of sensitivity, specificity, PPV and NPV are useful strengths. Ethical clearance from the Institutional Ethics Committee and prior parental informed consent are appropriately reported. However, the study has some important limitations. It is a single center study with only 72 neonates, which limits generalizability. The use of peripheral venous blood culture as the reference standard should also be discussed more carefully because it is not an absolute gold standard. The very small number of positive cultures makes some statistical comparisons less robust. The conclusion that UCBC is a dependable alternative should therefore be stated more cautiously. The manuscript is generally understandable, but several sentences require grammatical and language correction. Overall, the study has practical value but requires minor revision before publication.

Previously Published anywhere/Plagiarism check:

The manuscript appears to report original prospective data from 72 high risk neonates, and no indication of previous publication or duplicate submission is evident in the submitted paper. However, previous publication and plagiarism cannot be confirmed from manuscript review alone. A standard similarity check should be completed by the journal before publication. The cited literature should also be checked for accuracy and consistency.