OPEN PEER REVIEW

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- Education of both authors and new students
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Peer Review Report for "Can Non-Invasive Methods Be Clinically Useful for Diagnosis and Severity of Portal Hypertension?"

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Review Timeline:

Submit Date:	7 Dec 2019
Revised Date:	4 Apr 2020
Accepted Date:	26 Apr 2020

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | Revision (0) 29 Dec 2019

Dear AE,

- This paper is dealing with an important problem, non-invasive methods for diagnosing and assessment of the severity of portal hypertension.
- It is intended to be a review, but it is not following the PRISMA rules for a systematic review. Probably, it would be better to try to follow some of the rules for systematic review, even that the authors consider that the paper could be just a review, not a systematic one.
- The abstract and also the paragraph on methods should add more to evidence acquisition: how the studied articles were selected, what were the aspects followed in these papers...
- The Context is presenting the importance to have new non-invasive methods for diagnosing the presence and severity of portal hypertension and the risk of hemorrhage from esophageal varices.
- The Results are presenting each of the techniques with advantages, some disadvantages, and data from research studies. I consider that the results should be presented in a better-structured manner: presentation of the techniques, advantages, disadvantages, results of the studies on specificity and sensitivity of the method used to diagnose portal hypertension or the presence of esophageal varices and risk of hemorrhages. For some techniques, all these data are present but probably it would be better to have for all the

same structure of presenting the information.
- The References include many papers dealing with this issue, some of them quite recent (2017-2018). There is a need for editing for some of the references (ex. 11, 40, 56).
The use of the English language is correct and there is no need for important corrections.
Just review the text, after rewriting... October, not October
Based on all these reasons, I consider that the paper is better to be rewritten and then to be reviewed again before publishing.
Thanks.

mohamadali abyazi: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 24 Mar 2020

Dear AE,
Many thanks for sending the manuscript.
I have gone through the manuscript and in my view, the authors have done very good scientific work. However, the manuscript has several considerations.
- The purpose mentioned in the title does not appear in the conclusions section.
- The sensitivity and specificity of the methods have not been elucidated
- It is better to argue in the discussion that non-specific tests are more valuable in non-severe cases of port hypertension.
- The endoscopic procedure is invasive but the treatment can be treated along with the diagnosis.
- There are some technical considerations to consider in evaluating other colleagues.
So I request that this draft be rewritten.
with best regards.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 27 Mar 2020

Dear EIC,
Taking into account the existing comments, it seems that rewriting with the above-mentioned material would be helpful.
Thanks.

Seyed Moayed Alavian: EIC | **Revision** (0) 28 Mar 2020

Dear Author,
Your article is reviewed by the reviewers carefully. According to their comments, this document needs minor revision. Please follow their comments as requested.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Letter to the Reviewer 1

We took into account your recommendations and we made the following changes:
(highlighted in red in the document)

1.The purpose mentioned in the title does not appear in the conclusions section.

The purpose is now mentioned in the conclusion.

2. The sensitivity and specificity of the methods have not been elucidated

Sensitivity and specificity have been added for all methods where they were reported in the studies cited.

3. It is better to argue in the discussion that non-specific tests are more valuable in non-severe cases of port hypertension.

The conclusion now reflects the fact that non-invasive tests are designed for patients not requiring therapy (less severe patients).

4. The endoscopic procedure is invasive but the treatment can be treated along with the diagnosis.

The conclusion has been expanded, and this limitation has been acknowledged. In our view, the purpose of non-invasive tests is to replace invasive procedures where therapy is not needed, and to reduce the need for invasive procedures as much as possible (but not completely).

5. There are some technical considerations to consider in evaluating other colleagues.

We take into account the technical difficulties of each non-invasive method.

Letter to the Reviewer 2

We took into account your recommendations and we made the following changes: (highlighted in green in the document)

1. It is intended to be a review, but it is not following the PRISMA rules for a systematic review. Probably, it would be better to try to follow some of the rules for systematic review, even that the authors consider that the paper could be just a review, not a systematic one.

The review is indeed not a systematic one, however the article was restructured to more closely follow the PRISMA 2009 guide. As a special note, the name of the paper sections ("Context" rather than "Introduction" and "Evidence Acquisition" rather than "Materials and Methods") are named as such per author guidelines and template for reviews.

The abstract and also the paragraph on methods should add more to evidence acquisition: how the studied articles were selected, what were the aspects followed in these papers…

More data on article selection and database search keywords have been added to the "Evidence Acquisition" section.

The Context is presenting the importance to have new non-invasive methods for diagnosing the presence and severity of portal hypertension and the risk of hemorrhage from esophageal varices.

The paper underlines the non-invasive methods for diagnosing the presence and severity of portal hypertension especially in patients with esophageal varices at high risk for hemorrhage.

The Results are presenting each of the techniques with advantages, some disadvantages, and data from research studies. I consider that the results should be presented in a better-structured manner: presentation of the techniques, advantages, disadvantages, results of the studies on specificity and sensitivity of the method used to diagnose portal hypertension or the presence of esophageal varices and risk of hemorrhages. For some techniques, all these data are present but probably it would be better to have for all the same structure of presenting the information.

The structure of each technique has been rearranged to more closely follow the proposed structure. More data has been added regarding sensitivity and specificity of each method (where available). Please note that the restructuring has not been highlighted as it would have involved highlighting large portions of the paper (most of the "Results" section), making it difficult to point out other changes to the paper.

The References include many papers dealing with this issue, some of them quite recent (2017-2018). There is a need for editing for some of the references (ex. 11, 40, 56).

More recent references have been added (2017-2019).

Just review the text, after rewriting… October, not Octomber

Octobmer has been corrected to October. The text has been spell and grammar re-checked.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 25 Apr 2020

Dear EIC,
regardless of some spelling problems, its publication in the journal will enrich the scientific richness of the journal.
Thanks.

Seyed Moayed Alavian: EIC | **Revision** (1) 26 Apr 2020

Dear Author,
The document is reviewed carefully by the reviewers. According to their comments and your revisions as requested, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks.