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OPEN PEER REVIEW

The Association Between Zinc Levels and Inflammatory Markers in Pediatric Urinary Tract Infections: A Cross-Sectional Study with New Insights

Samira Zakeri Shahvari, Maryam Esteghamati, Sara Sang Pahni

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

More about open peer review: brieflands.com/knowledgebase/opr

Contents

1 **Original submission** Referee 1, Referee 2, Associate Editor, Editor-in-Chief 2
2 **Revision 1** Referee 2, Associate Editor, Editor-in-Chief 4
Authors' reply to reviewers 5
Reviewer and editor comments 10

1 Original submission

4 comments · 10 Dec 2025 – 24 Dec 2025

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 10 Dec 2025

comment 1: The title contains several spelling and spacing errors (e.g., inflammatory, sights); consider revising for clarity and accuracy.

comment 2: The abstract has grammatical issues, run-on sentences, and capitalization inconsistencies; it needs editing for academic tone.

comment 3: The background section overstates zinc's role without adequate citations; consider balancing claims and improving coherence.

comment 4: The methods lack clarity regarding the sampling strategy; "descriptive study" and "simple random sampling" appear contradictory.

comment 5: The ethics section in the abstract does not align with typical journal structure; consider relocating and condensing it.

comment 6: Several paragraphs contain duplicated sentences (e.g., non-normal distribution and Levene's test are repeated); revise for conciseness.

comment 7: Use consistent terminology for procalcitonin (PCT vs. PTC); this inconsistency affects clarity.

comment 8: Statistical analyses need clearer justification, especially regarding non-normal data and the selection of non-parametric tests.

comment 9: The Results section includes interpretive statements; move interpretations to the Discussion to maintain structure.

comment 10: The Discussion overextends comparisons with unrelated populations (pregnant women, chronic inflammatory diseases); refine it to focus on pediatric UTI.

comment 11: Several citations are used to justify claims unrelated to the current dataset; ensure direct relevance.

comment 12: English grammar errors are frequent (verb tense, pluralization, punctuation); thorough language editing is required.

comment 13: The manuscript includes subjective or informal expressions (e.g., "added another fact"); revise to maintain scientific objectivity.

comment 14: Figures and tables are referenced but not clearly integrated; ensure proper placement and consistency.

comment 15: The Limitations section needs expansion on potential confounders, measurement variability, and sampling method constraints.

comment 16: The conclusion repeats earlier sentences and introduces no new synthesis; consider strengthening it with concise, evidence-based final statements.

comment 17: Formatting issues (spacing, inconsistent section numbering, frequent line breaks) reduce readability; revise according to journal style.

comment 18: The study design is labeled “cross-sectional,” but some wording describes a “descriptive” study; ensure methodological consistency.

comment 19: The introduction presents zinc as broadly prescribed in pediatric emergencies; this claim needs citation or reconsideration.

comment 20: The manuscript suggests an assessment of diagnostic value, yet no sensitivity/specificity or ROC analysis is provided; clarify the objective or remove the claim.

Referee 2 Reviewer

REJECT 21 Dec 2025

Dear AE,
Thank you for the invitation.
The manuscript explores the association between serum zinc levels and inflammatory markers in children hospitalized with urinary tract infection (UTI), a topic of potential clinical relevance. However, despite addressing an interesting hypothesis, the manuscript has substantial deficiencies in writing quality:
1-The language quality falls below the standard expected for publication in a peer-reviewed pediatric or infectious disease journal. Professional English-language editing is mandatory prior to reconsideration.
2-The phrase “new sights” in the title is incorrect; it should be “new insights.”
3-The Introduction reads as a mini-review rather than a focused rationale.
4-No exclusion criteria are clearly described (e.g., malnutrition, zinc supplementation, chronic disease).
5-The Results section is disorganized and nonscientific. Section headers are informal and grammatically incorrect.
6-The manuscript oscillates between stating that zinc does and does not affect PCT and UTI severity.
7-The Conclusion is poorly written and overstated.

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 21 Dec 2025

Dear EIC,
Thank you for the invitation. The manuscript in its current form is not suitable for publication due to extensive issues in writing, structure, methodology, and interpretation. A thorough rewrite, methodological clarification, and professional language editing are essential.

- Authors should rewrite the Introduction or Discussion in journal-ready form.
- Authors should edit the manuscript for scientific English.
- Authors should restructure the paper according to STROBE standards.

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 24 Dec 2025

Major Revision

2

Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

By best regards to reviewers, really thanks for your valuable comments.

Reviewer 0:
comment 1: The title contains several spelling and spacing errors (e.g., inflammatory, sights); consider revising for clarity and accuracy.

Title changed as you recommend.

comment 2: The abstract has grammatical issues, run-on sentences, and capitalization inconsistencies; it needs editing for academic tone.

Abstract structure was revised.

comment 3: The background section overstates zinc's role without adequate citations; consider balancing claims and improving coherence.

Sentence's structure revised to reduce overstating.

comment 4: Methods lack clarity regarding sampling strategy; "descriptive study" and "simple random sampling" appear contradictory.

We revised method section.

comment 5: The ethics section in the abstract does not align with typical journal structure; consider relocating and condensing.

We matched our structure base on journal sample.

comment 6: Several paragraphs contain duplicated sentences (e.g., non-normal distribution and Levene's test repeated); revise for conciseness.

Revised.
comment 7: Use consistent terminology for procalcitonin (PCT vs. PTC); this inconsistency affects clarity.

Revised.
comment 8: Statistical analyses need clearer justification, especially regarding non-normal data and the selection of non-parametric tests.

comment 9: Results section includes interpretive statements; move interpretations to the Discussion to maintain structure.

This section revised as you recommended.

comment 10: Discussion overextends comparisons with unrelated populations (pregnant women, chronic inflammatory diseases); refine to focus on pediatric UTI.

Our effort was to compare our results base on our subject and limitations that make best discussion accomplishment.

comment 11: Several citations are used to justify claims unrelated to the current dataset; ensure direct relevance.
we recheck about 6 references and revise them; those references was just to complete our discussion that was disputed zinc mechanism.

comment 12: English grammar errors are frequent (verb tense, pluralization, punctuation); thorough language editing is required.

Our passage revised grammatically.

comment 13: The manuscript includes subjective or informal expressions (e.g., "added another fact"); revise to maintain scientific objectivity.

our sentences were revised.

comment 14: Figures and tables are referenced but not clearly integrated; ensure proper placement and consistency.

By high respect Tables and figures are referred truly in right place to support passage.

comment 15: Limitations section needs expansion on potential confounders, measurement variability, and sampling method constraints.
limitation section were revised.
comment 16: The conclusion repeats earlier sentences and introduces no new synthesis; consider strengthening with concise, evidence-based final statements.

Was revised.

comment 17: Formatting issues (spacing, inconsistent section numbering, frequent line breaks) reduce readability; revise according to journal style.

We matched our passage base on journal recommendation.

comment 18: The study design is labeled "cross-sectional," but some wording describes a "descriptive" study; ensure methodological consistency.

Was revised.

comment 19: The introduction presents zinc as clinically prescribed broadly in pediatric emergencies; this claim needs citation or reconsideration.

Was revised.

comment 20: The manuscript suggests diagnostic value assessment, yet no sensitivity/specificity or ROC analysis is provided; clarify the objective or remove the claim.

We changed our manuscript structure to change our main conceive.

Reviewer 2:
Dear AE,
Thank you for invitation.
The manuscript explores the association between serum zinc levels and inflammatory markers in children hospitalized with urinary tract infection (UTI), a topic of potential clinical relevance. However, despite addressing an interesting hypothesis, the manuscript has substantial deficiencies in writing quality:
1-language quality falls below the standard expected for publication in a peer-reviewed pediatric or infectious disease journal. A full professional English-language editing is mandatory prior to reconsideration.

Passage checked again.
2-Phrase "new sights" in Title is incorrect; it should be "new insights."

Revised.
3-The Introduction reads as a mini-review rather than a focused rationale.

We made some changes in introduction.

4-No exclusion criteria are clearly described (e.g., malnutrition, zinc supplementation, chronic disease).

By high respect we described our exclusion in table 1.

5-Results Section Is Disorganized and Non-Scientific. Section headers are informal and grammatically incorrect.

Passage structure revised again.
6-The manuscript oscillates between stating zinc does and does not affect PCT and UTI severity.

We stack between old results that show effect and our results we does not effect. So we try to discuss boss of them, but we clarified that eventually our results show not effect.
7-Conclusion Is Poorly Written and Overstated.

Revised.

Associate Editor's Comments:

Associate Editor 0:
Dear EIC,
Thank you for invitation. The manuscript in its current form is not suitable for publication due to extensive issues in writing, structure, methodology, and interpretation. A thorough rewrite, methodological clarification, and professional language editing are essential.

-Authors should rewrite the Introduction or Discussion in journal-ready form

We matched our structure base on your form.
-Authors should Edit the manuscript for scientific English

Revised.
-Authors should restructure the paper according to STROBE standards.

We Revised our structure.

2 Revision 1

3 comments · 1 Feb 2026 – 12 Feb 2026

Referee 2 Reviewer

ACCEPT 1 Feb 2026

Dear AE,
I reviewed the REVISED version of manuscript ID 168445. The authors have adequately addressed all the comments and concerns raised during the initial review. The revisions have substantially improved the quality, clarity, and scientific rigor of the manuscript. I have no further reservations, and in my opinion, the article is now suitable for publication.

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 12 Feb 2026

Dear EIC.
The previous errors have been corrected, and there are no further recommendations.

Editor-in-Chief

ACCEPT 12 Feb 2026

Accept