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Author1[*1] and **author2**[2]

[1] *Type full address here,*
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Type of Article

Aims/ objectives: To correlate platelet count, splenic index (SI), platelet count/spleen diameter ratio and portal-systemic venous collaterals with the presence of esophageal varices in advanced liver disease to validate other screening parameters.

Study design: Cross-sectional study.

Place and Duration of Study: Department of Medicine (Medical Unit IV) and Department of Radiology, Services Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS), Services Hospital Lahore, between June 2009 and July 2010.

Methodology: We included 63 patients (40 men, 23 women; age range 18-75 years) with liver cirrhosis and portal hypertension, with or without the medical history of gastrointestinal bleeding. Clinical as well as hematological examination (platelet count) and ultrasonography (gray as well as color Doppler scale including splenic index and splenorenal/ pancreaticoduodenal collaterals) was done.

Results: Out of 63 patients, 36 patients with small varices (F1/F2) and 27 with larger (F3) varices were detected on endoscope. Significant increase in mean splenic index from low (86.7 +/- 27.4) to high (94.7 +/- 27.7) grade varices was documented.

Conclusion: Non-invasive independent predictors for screening esophageal varices may decrease medical as well as financial burden, hence improving the management of cirrhotic patients. These predictors, however, need further work to validate reliability.

*Corresponding author: E-mail: abc@abc.com