

GeneXpert for abdominal tuberculosis

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We read with keen interest the paper on abdominal tuberculosis by Udgirkar and colleagues where the authors reported a large number of patients with abdominal tuberculosis from Western India⁽¹⁾.

This report is one of the few reports which have highlighted the use of GeneXpert for diagnosis of abdominal tuberculosis. Previous reports have suggested that the positivity of GeneXpert in intestinal tuberculosis to be 8% and 32% respectively^(2,3). Bellam et al. also found one patient to have rifampin resistance amongst their cases⁽³⁾. As per the findings reported by Udgirkar et al.,

GeneXpert was positive in 26% of patients. The report includes a mixture of cases of peritoneal and intestinal tuberculosis and the sensitivity of GeneXpert is likely to vary in these two settings. The authors report that none of the ascitic fluid samples were positive. Interestingly, a Cochrane review combining 20 studies has reported the sensitivity of Gene Xpert in peritoneal fluid to be 50%⁽⁴⁾. It is unclear why the sensitivity was so low in the present study. Also it would be worthwhile to know the sensitivity in the intestinal tissue samples and the therapeutic approach to patients who tested positive for rifampin resistance.

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