Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Impact of maternal HIV-1 viremia on lymphocyte subsets among HIV-exposed uninfected infants: Protective mechanism or immunodeficiency?

**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 3 March 2014

**Reviewer:** Palma Palma

**Reviewer’s report:**

In the manuscript by Kakkar F. et al, the authors analyze if in utero exposure to high levels of HIV-1 viremia may be responsible of immunological changes. The topic of the manuscript is interesting. Overall the manuscript is well written. However, the study design and the immunological profile performed is very limited.

Major limitations to the study are represented by the absence of absolute T-cell count. It is neither clear if with absolute number the result still remain significant. Thus new statistical analysis reporting absolute cell count numbers should be performed. Furthermore poor informations on the status of the mother are reported.

Minor questions: Did you observe any incidence of vascular malformations or other side effects in your study? Is there any relation with Retrovir exposure as reported by other authors?

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**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests