Reviewer’s report

Title: Measurement of serum procalcitonin levels for the early diagnosis of spontaneous bacterial peritonitis in patients with decompensated liver cirrhosis

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Reviewer: Marek Hartleb

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Testing serum procalcitonin (PCT) as a biomarker of spontaneous bacterial peritonitis (SBP) is not an original idea. Several studies providing conflicting results have been published on this issue. Unfortunately, the authors of this study omitted majority of these papers in presentation the background or discussing the result (see below).


The authors suggest that they provided evidence about utility of PTC in early stage of SBP. In fact, neither the study design (retrospective) nor clinical characteristics of patients convince the reader that their patients were in the initial and symptom free stage of SBP when there is no leukocytosis, increased CRP or abdominal tenderness.

The first part of discussion taking about 50% of the text does not regard the results of this study.

Minor remark
(Introduction) There is probably no causal relationship between two parts of the following sentence “However, the widespread use of quinolones and other antibiotics in cirrhosis has favored changes in bacterial flora and the development of antibiotic resistance, so the frequency of positive bacterial cultures are <40%”.

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

**Quality of written English**: Acceptable

**Statistical review**: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests**: I declare that I have no competing interests