Reviewer’s report

Title: Enteral Nutrition protects Children undergoing Allogeneic Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation from Blood Stream Infections

Version: 0 Date: 24 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Dalia El Khoury

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript is of importance to the pediatric population.

However, there are major changes that need to be introduced before considering it for publication. Also, English editing is needed throughout the manuscript including the title. Also, it is a bit confusing the use of comma instead of decimal point when referring to numbers; as this journal targets international research audiences, suggest to replace the comma with a decimal point for all numbers in the manuscript.

- Abstract: abstract lacks some important information. Authors reported results without providing enough details about the methods applied. For how long the comparison between the two groups was conducted?; authors reported a reduction in the incidence of Blood Stream Infection (BSI) without specifying how BSI was assessed - which parameters were used to assess BSI?; what other variables were included in the multivariate analysis in addition to the type of nutritional support?; it is not clear whether the two groups had similar characteristics such as BMI at baseline before the initiation of any form of nutritional support-this should be clarified by authors.

- Introduction: suggest to expand a little bit the introduction section. The whole focus of the manuscript is on Allogeneic Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation, and this term is not defined anywhere - suggest to add few sentences about this transplantation process, in which conditions it is recommended, what are the clinical implications of this transplantation, and how this process affects the nutritional needs of an individual; suggest to discuss briefly the nutritional needs of this pediatric population; then, suggest to add a section on the common nutritional approaches used to prepare for and manage the nutritional consequences of this transplantation, including EN and PN.

- Methods: abbreviations should be explained throughout the manuscript in addition to the list of abbreviations, which is not done consistently throughout the manuscript. Line 110, abbreviations such as CMV and EBV should be explained; line 117, CVC abbreviation should be explained. matching or non matching of both groups for all baseline characteristics assessed such as BMI, age etc. including the outcomes of interest should be discussed; authors should clarify whether the two groups were matched or not at baseline for different characteristics including BMI, age, and other outcomes of interest; lines 149-150, the sentence "Weight loss was calculated using as basal value the one of the day of HSCT” is not clear - please rewrite; line 150 "BMI was then calculated based on the height of admission” is not clear - BMI abbreviation should be explained
and the formula used to calculate it should be clearly described; the statistical analysis section is very brief and needs to be expanded and some sections clarified - for instance, authors refer to univariate analysis without having any prior discussion on it.

- Results: line 173, BMI and BMI z scores should be included in the discussion about the comparison of characteristics at baseline between the two groups; lines 178-180, authors discuss the multivariate analysis without elaborating 1) on the variables tested in a univariate analysis; and 2) the variables found significant and included in the multivariate analysis; line 181, "shorter duration of fever in the first 30 days post transplant was also observed"... in which group?.

- Discussion: authors refer to "fast", lines 202 and 203, for the first time without previous explanation - what are they referring to in here?.

- References: check comments on Introduction section - increase the number of references; also, suggest to include more up-to-date references.

- Table 1: need to define P - what does it stand for and is the level of significance?; also, in the footnotes, need to remind readers briefly on the statistical analysis used to calculate the P value; also, need to define what numbers (and numbers in parentheses) mean.

- Table 2: same comments as for Table 1.

- Figure legends on page 13 are very brief and not clear; please rewrite titles that are more self-explanatory.

- Figure 2: Y and X axis should have titles. Did authors compare statistically the Y values in the different BMI groups? - this should indicated if yes in the figure legend and the asterisks signs should be used where statistically significant differences exist.

- Figure 3: Y axis should have a title; what does the % in the Y axis stand for?

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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