

Accuracy of Change in Maternal Serum Alfa Fetoprotein as a Diagnostic Test for Quantitative Assessment of Feto-Maternal Hemorrhage

Thesis

Submitted for partial fulfillment of Master degree
in obstetrics and Gynaecology

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2016

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قالوا

سبحانك لا علم لنا
إلا ما علمتنا إنك أنت
العليم العظيم

صدقة الله العظيم

سورة البقرة الآية: ٣٢



Acknowledgments

*First and foremost, I feel always indebted to **Allah**, the Most Beneficent and Merciful.*

*I wish to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to **Prof. Dr./ Magdy Mohamed Kamal**, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine – Ain Shams University, for his constructive criticism, unlimited help and giving me the privilege to work under his supervision.*

*My most sincere gratitude is also extended to **Assistant Prof./ Tamer Farouk Borg**, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine – Ain Shams University, for his enthusiastic help, continuous supervision, guidance and support throughout this work.*

*Words fail to express my appreciation to **Dr./ Ayman Abd-Elkader Mohamed**, Lecturer of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine – Ain Shams University, for his enthusiastic help, continuous supervision, guidance and support throughout this work.*

*Last but not least, I can't forget to thank all members of my Family, especially my **Parents** and my **Husband**, for pushing me forward in every step in the journey of my life and my **Husband** for his support throughout every step of this work.*

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List of Contents

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
List of Abbreviations	I
List of Tables.....	ii
List of Figures	iii
Introduction	1
Aim of the Work.....	7
Review of Literature	
Fetomaternal Hemorrhage (FMH)	8
Kleihauer Betke Test	19
Flow Cytometry.....	28
Alpha-Fetoprotein	33
Anti-D.....	45
Patients and Methods.....	49
Results.....	61
Discussion	75
Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations	88
References	96
Arabic Summary	—

List of Abbreviations

<i>Abbr.</i>	<i>Full-term</i>
AUROC	: Area under Receiver-operating characteristic curve
CTG	: Cardiotocography
CVS	: Chorionic villous sampling
DAT	: direct antiglobin test
EDTA	: Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
EST	: Endodermal sinus tumour
FHR	: Fetal heart rate
FMH	: Fetomaternal haemorrhage
IUD	: Intrauterine death
IVT	: Intravascular intrauterine transfusion
KBT	: Kleiheauer-Betke test
MCA	: Middle cerebral artery
MoM	: Multiples of median
MSAFP	: Maternal serum alfa-feto protein
NPV	: Negative predictive value
PBS	: Phosphate buffered saline
PPV	: Positive predictive value
PSV	: Peak systolic velocity
PV	: Per-vaginal
RAAP	: Routine antenatal anti-D prophylaxis
RBCs	: Red blood cells
RhD	: Rhesus D
ROCcurve	: Receiver-operating characteristic curve

List of Tables

<i>Table No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
Table (1):	Varriation in Estimated Volume of Fetomaternal Hemorrhage for Kleihauer-Betke Test result of 0.3% using Published Formulas	23
Table (2):	Variables potentially contributing to over- or underestimation of FMH by the Kleihauer-Betke test	25
Table (3):	Characteristics of the whole study population.....	61
Table (4):	Cross-tabulation of maternal versus fetal ABO/Rh blood group.....	62
Table (5):	Maternal serum α -fetoprotein (MSAFP) level before and after delivery in the whole study population	63
Table (6):	Result of KBT in the whole study population	64
Table (7):	Inter-group comparison of maternal serum α -fetoprotein (MSAFP) level in patients with positive or negative KBT	65
Table (8):	Within-group comparison of maternal serum α -fetoprotein (MSAFP) level before and after delivery in patients with positive or negative KBT	69
Table (9):	Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis for the diagnosis of significant fetomaternal hemorrhage using post-delivery MSAFP, absolute change in MSAFP, or percentage of change in MSAFP	70
Table (10):	Diagnostic value of a conventional cut-off criterion of >40% increase in MSAFP level	74

List of Figures

<i>Figure No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
Figure (1):	High Doppler imaging of the middle cerebral artery peak systolic velocity (68.5) in anemic fetus with fetal Hb 7.5 at 30 weeks 6 days' gestation of a multi gravida 29 years.....	10
Figure (2):	Sinuousoidal fetal heart rate pattern	11
Figure (3):	Ultrasound findings of fetal hydrops	12
Figure (4):	Hydropic infant	12
Figure (5):	Microscopic appearance of darkly stained fetal RBCs and pale maternal (ghost) RBCs in Kleihauer-Betke Test. The image shows 10 % fetal cells.....	27
Figure (6):	Flow cytometry	31
Figure (7):	Percentage of patients with positive or negative KBT.	64
Figure (8):	Box plot showing the pre- and post-delivery MSAFP in patients positive or negative KBT.	66
Figure (9):	Box plot showing the absolute change in MSAFP in patients with positive or negative KBT.	67
Figure (10):	Box plot showing the percentage of change in MSAFP in patients with positive or negative KBT. Markers represent individual observations. Box represents the range from the first to third quartile (interquartile range).	68

Figure (11): Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis for the diagnosis of significant fetomaternal hemorrhage using post-delivery MSAFP.	71
Figure (12): Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis for the diagnosis of significant fetomaternal hemorrhage using the absolute change in MSAFP.....	72
Figure (13): Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis for the diagnosis of significant fetomaternal hemorrhage using the percentage of change in MSAFP.	73

Introduction

Feto-maternal hemorrhage is considered to be a grave complication which may occur during pregnancy. And due to its graveness the feto-maternal hemorrhage renders the pregnancy as a high risk condition so it must be diagnosed, followed and managed properly in order to avoid any hazards on the mother and the fetus (*Sebring et al., 1990*).

Fetal and maternal circulations normally are supposed not to be in direct contact. The placental barrier is found there to play the role of separation between them in a way that receiving nutrients by the fetus and gas exchange between mother and fetus, are not compromised whatsoever. That is why the placental abnormalities are the most encountered risk factor in cases that are confirmed to be suffering from feto-maternal hemorrhage (*Bernstein et al., 1992*).

In normal pregnancy this abnormal contact between the fetal and maternal circulations may occur so late during delivery. Up to 1 ml of blood may pass. But in an abnormal pregnancy, feto-maternal hemorrhage is defined as the hemorrhage of 30 ml or more, of whole blood from a fetus into the maternal circulation. As less than 30 ml is considered benign and passes without any remarkable side effects (*Sebring et al., 1990*).

The problem in fetomaternal hemorrhage appears when fetal blood escapes into the maternal circulation in a considerable amount 30 ml or more. That shall compromise the fetal condition leading to many morbidities and mortalities. The result varies from minimal degree of fetal anemia up to severe degree of fetal anemia (*Zizka et al., 2001*).

And lethal hydrops fetalis may follow that, leading to fetal cerebral edema, kernicterus, fluid collection in all body spaces, severe pallor and failed circulation (due to the escaping red cells) and eventually ending in death of the fetus (*Zizka et al., 2001*).

Occurrence of fetomaternal hemorrhage is not a predictable event. Even some actual cases are listed to be of unknown cause (*Bird et al., 1999*).

Also as a clinical wise, most of the fetomaternal hemorrhage cases never produce these evident signs or symptoms by which a confirmed diagnosis can be made upon, until it is very late (*Kecskes, 2003*).

But somehow it might be linked to certain risk factors which if happened to the pregnant lady before in her obstetrical medical history, it gives a clue that this lady in particular is more susceptible for having fetomaternal hemorrhage in her next pregnancies. So more antenatal care

and cautious follow up must be given to such lady in order to avoid any complications as possible and also to detect occurrence of the feto-maternal hemorrhage as earliest so that the management she will be having, could give more optimum outcome (*Sebring et al., 1990*).

These risk factors include a previous history of spontaneous stillbirth, placental disruption and abnormalities (*Bernstein et al., 1992*), anterior position of the placenta, surgical and manual removal of the placenta, twin (monochorionic, monozygotic) pregnancy, premature rupture of membranes, invasive diagnostic procedures as cordocentesis, preterm labor, post maturity, maternal trauma, external version, vaginal assisted delivery, cesarean section or massive blood loss during pregnancy (*David et al., 2004*).

Quantification of feto-maternal hemorrhage is done when severe FMH is suspected and accordingly dose can be adjusted. Additional dose of 10 IU of anti-D should be given for every additional 0.5 mL of fetal RBCs in maternal circulation (*White et al., 2009*).

Methods for quantification of FMH:

Kleihauer–Betke test is the gold standard test for quantification of FMH (*Maciuleviciene et al., 2008*).

The controversy appears in that Kleihauer -Betke test is a test which requires a specific laboratory setting and a highly performing hematology specialist so it is not that easy to be conducted and to give reliable results (*Agarwal et al., 2011*).

There are many disadvantages to the Kleihauer-Betke test, firstly it is subjected to the human error (in the microscopic manual method) and the time between sampling and testing, if prolonged, this may lead to clotting of the sample and consequently false interpretation (in both of the microscopic manual and the microscopic automated methods)(*Lachman et al., 1977*).

There is flow cytometry method which is detecting fetal red cells in the maternal blood by using anti-fetal red cells antibodies (*Pelikan et al., 2004*).

Another trial worked on detecting the genomic material of the nucleated fetal red cells using molecular biology techniques. Both methods showed promising results, but still more work is needed to accredit them as substitutes to the standard Kleihauer –Betke test(*Hiromiet al.,1995*).

Alpha- fetoprotein (AFP) is found in both fetal serum and also amniotic fluid. This protein is produced early in gestation by the fetal yolk sac and then later in the liver and gastrointestinal tract. The true function of AFP is unknown (*Johnson et al., 2012*).

It is considered to be one of the most important markers which are used nowadays in early screening and diagnosis of many of high risk conditions and fetal abnormalities and malformations during pregnancy (*Firouzbadi et al., 2010*).

For example maternal serum level of the Alpha-Fetoprotein is found by evidence to be raised hugely if the fetus has nervous system malformations as neural tube defects (example Spina bifida and anencephaly) or Down syndrome (*Wang et al., 2009*).

Since fetal serum level of Alpha-Fetoprotein is found by evidence to be raised in cases of severe fetal anemia, so estimation of maternal serum level of Alpha-Fetoprotein may act as a new method for detection of occurrence of fetomaternal hemorrhage in cases of women at risk of fetal anemia (*Bartha et al., 2006*).

This recommended new method shall overcome disadvantages of the standard Kleihauer-Betke test and also it has the advantage of its stability. So storage of samples shall never give false results as in Kleihauer-Betke test (*Lachman et al., 1977*).

Many studies were working on finding the link between elevated maternal serum level of Alpha-Fetoprotein

and cases of women who are known to be complaining of previous several attacks of vaginal bleeding and feto-maternal hemorrhage especially when accompanied with risk factors as placental abnormalities (*Bernstein et al., 1992*), undergoing procedure of cordocentesis (*Van Selm et al., 2005*) and preterm delivery (*Williams et al., 1992*).

No available well conducted study in the literature assessing maternal serum level of alpha fetoprotein in assessment of intrapartum feto-maternal hemorrhage.

Aim of the Work

Study question:

In pregnant women undergoing vaginal delivery, is the change in maternal serum Alpha fetoprotein, before and after delivery, accurate in the quantification of FMH?

Study hypothesis:

We hypothesize that, in pregnant women undergoing vaginal delivery, the change in maternal serum Alpha fetoprotein, before and after delivery, is accurate in quantification of FMH.

Aim of the work:

To find an easier and cheaper test for detection and quantification of FMH, with less inter- and intra- observer variation than the standard KBT.