

**Hyponatremia and hypoalbuminemia as a poor prognostic marker in chronic liver disease patients : an observational study at tertiary care hospital Dehradun**

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Gagan deep Acharya, Senior Resident, Deptt. Internal Medicine, College Swami Rama Himalayan University, Jolly Grant Dehradun Uttarakhand

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Shikha Sharma, MO, Deptt. Gynaecology, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Govt. Medical College, Tanda (H.P.)

**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Shikha Sharma, MO, Deptt. Gynaecology, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Govt. Medical College, Tanda (H.P.)

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Liver cirrhosis has a high morbidity and mortality, which is the 14th most common cause of death all over the world. Abnormally low serum sodium is the most common electrolyte disturbance in cirrhosis, occurring in approximately 30% of this patient population. To study the hyponatremia and hypoalbuminemia as a poor prognostic marker in chronic liver disease patients.

**Methods:** The study was conducted in the department of Medicine, Swami Rama Himalayan University, Swami Ram Nagar, Dehradun over a period of 12 months. Patients with chronic liver disease were recruited from medical wards after obtaining ethical clearance and written informed consent from the patient.

**Result:** Out of total 171 patients 24 (14.03%) patients expired while 147 (85.96%) were survivors. The serum albumin level in survival patients was 2.40±0.66 gm/dl and in expired patients was 1.79±0.66 gm/dl. The serum sodium level in survival patients was 133.02 ±

4.25 mmol and in expired patients was 1.29 ± 6.30 mmol. The serum potassium level in survival patients was 4.20±1.16 mmol and in expired patients was 4.32±1.06 mmol.

**Conclusion:** We concluded that hyponatremia and hypoalbuminemia was a poor prognostic marker in chronic liver disease patients

**Keywords:** Hyponatremia, Hypoalbuminemia, Liver disease.

**Introduction**

Cirrhosis, also known as liver cirrhosis or hepatic cirrhosis, is the impaired liver function caused by the formation of scar tissue known as fibrosis, due to damage caused by liver disease. Damage causes tissue repair and subsequent scar tissue, which over time can replace normal functioning tissue leading to the impaired liver function of cirrhosis. Typically, the disease develops slowly over months or years. Early symptoms may include tiredness, weakness, loss of appetite, unexplained weight loss, nausea and sickness, and discomfort in the upper right abdomen.<sup>1-3</sup>

Abnormally low serum sodium is the most common electrolyte disturbance in cirrhosis, occurring in approximately 30% of this patient population. Hyponatremia, defined as serum sodium below 130 mmol/L, usually occurs in those with advanced cirrhosis. The development of hyponatremia portends poor prognosis and is associated with increased mortality from liver disease, hepatic decompensation, and decreased quality of life. Therefore, determining an effective and efficient means of correcting hyponatremia in the hospitalized patient with cirrhosis is of paramount importance.<sup>4</sup>

Hyponatremia in advanced cirrhosis results from the hemodynamic complications associated with worsening portal hypertension, primarily intravascular hypovolemia and renal hypoperfusion in the setting of total body volume overload. Furthermore, the hepatic synthetic dysfunction associated with cirrhosis leads to abnormally low serum levels of albumin, a negatively charged protein that helps maintain adequate plasma oncotic pressure. Albumin therapy for intravascular volume expansion in cirrhosis was introduced as early as the 1950s, and has been shown in small studies to be superior to normal saline or fluid restriction for correcting serum sodium in cirrhotics.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Material And Methods**

The study was conducted in the department of Medicine, Swami Rama Himalayan University, Swami Ram Nagar, Dehradun over a period of 12 months. Patients with chronic liver disease were recruited from medical wards after obtaining ethical clearance and written informed consent from the patient.

**Study Design:** Observational longitudinal follow up study.

**Sample size:** 171 patients.

It was calculated on the basis of formula  $n = z^2 PQ/d^2$  where n is a desired sample size, P is expected proportion of accurate etiology and spectrum of chronic liver disease, Q is 1-P with the level of significance (0.05) and 15% relative error. With these assumptions calculated sample size is 171.

#### **Selection of Subjects**

##### **Inclusion Criteria**

- Patients of more than 18 years of age.
- Adult patients diagnosed with chronic liver disease.

##### **Exclusion Criteria**

- Patients with ascites due to tuberculosis or malignancy.
- Patients with malignancies other than hepatocellular carcinoma.

##### **Data analysis**

- Interpretation and analysis with comparison of obtained results was carried out and data thus collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis of patients with chronic liver disease using SPSS 19, Student's T-test was used for comparison of continuous data. p-value < 0.05 was considered significant. All reported P values are two sided.

##### **Results**

The present study was carried out on 171 cases of chronic liver disease.

Age range of patients was from 20 to 80 years. Mean age of patients was

$48.94 \pm 12.63$  years. Male preponderance was seen in our series. Maximum number of patients of chronic liver disease were in the age group of 51 to 60 years.

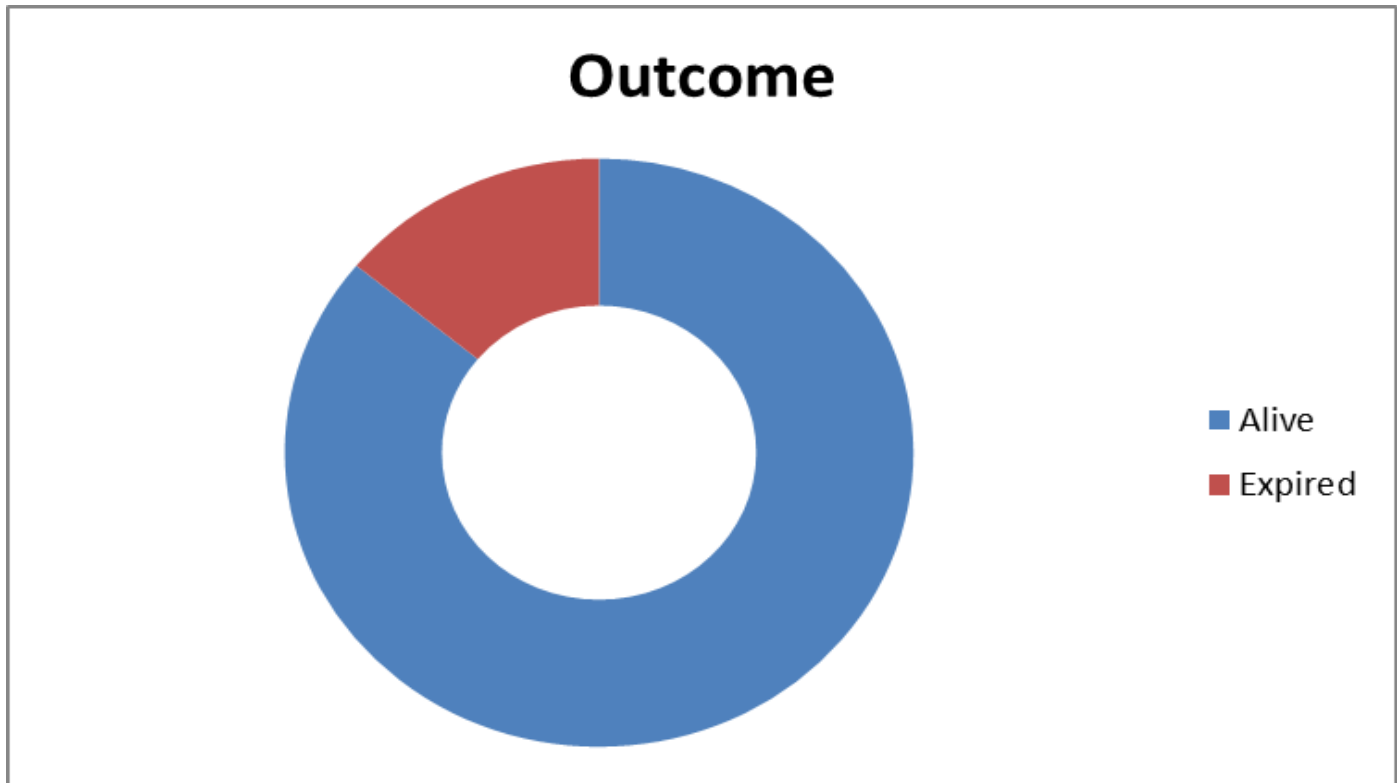


Figure 1: Mortality among CLD patients

Out of total 171 patients 24 (14.03%) patients expired while 147 (85.96%) were survivors

Table 1: Comparison of baseline laboratory parameters and scores between survivors and the patients who died within 3 months.

	Total patients (n=171)	Survivors (n=147)	Patients who died (n= 24)	Survivor vs Died p value	95% CI
Serum Albumin (g/dL)	2.31±0.68	2.40±0.66	1.79±0.53	0.000	0.32 to 0.88
Serum Sodium (mmol)	132.57±4.70	133.02±4.25	129.88±6.30	0.002	1.14 to 5.13
Serum Potassium (mmol)	4.21±1.14	4.20±1.16	4.32±1.06	0.642	-0.61 to 0.38

The serum albumin level in survival patients was 2.40±0.66 gm/dl and in expired patients was 1.79±0.66 gm/dl. The serum sodium level in survival patients was 133.02±4.25 mmol and in expired patients was 1.29±6.30 mmol. The serum potassium level in survival patients was 4.20±1.16 mmol and in expired patients was 4.32±1.06 mmol.

### Discussion

As the liver cirrhosis progresses, there is fall in serum sodium concentration. It is a negative prognostic factor associated with increased short-term mortality. <sup>7</sup>During cirrhosis, hyponatremia results from solute free water retention.

Volume expansion with resuscitative fluid infusion is often required for hospitalized cirrhotic patients. Evidence supports human serum albumin infusion in the treatment of certain specific complications of cirrhosis including HRS and prevention of both acute kidney injury in SBP and post-paracentesis circulatory dysfunction following large volume paracentesis. However, given the significantly higher cost associated with albumin compared to crystalloid, limiting administration to appropriate clinical indications is essential.<sup>6</sup>

Albumin infusion is postulated to confer many benefits to cirrhotic patients beyond volume expansion, including immunomodulation, antioxidant effects, endothelial stabilization, and hemostatic effects, any and all of which might contribute to increased survival.<sup>7</sup>

### Conclusion

We concluded that hyponatremia and hypoalbuminemia was a poor prognostic marker in chronic liver disease patients

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