

## Bacteriological profile and antibiotic resistance pattern in blood stream infection in critical care units of a tertiary care hospital in North India

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### Abstract

**Background:** Blood stream infections (BSIs) are an important cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. The condition can be life threatening in critically ill patients in intensive care unit (ICUs) of the hospital. Emergence of resistance among the bacterial pathogens causing these infections is another issue of the public health concern.

**Objectives:** This study was carried out in our hospital which is attached to a medical college in North India, to know the spectrum of bacterial pathogens causing BSIs in the patients admitted to the critical care units also to know the trends of resistance among these agents.

**Materials & Methods:** It was a hospital based retrospective cross-sectional study and was carried out in tertiary care hospital in North India. The data was collected by reviewing the records of 565 patients admitted to various critical care units (ICUs) of the hospital from May 2015 to March 2016.

**Results:** Out of total 565 blood samples of the patients suspected of bacteremia, admitted to critical care units of the hospital 140 were culture positive. Out of these isolates 74(53%) were Gram positive bacteria (GPB) and 55(39.3%) were Gram negative bacteria (GNB) and 11(7.9%) were non-albicans Candida. The predominant bacterial isolate were Coagulase negative staphylococcus (CoNS) 49 (34.5%) followed by *Acinetobacter* 22 (15.4%) and *Staphylococcus aureus* 20 (14%). The antimicrobial resistance profile of both Gram positive and Gram negative isolates showed a high prevalence of resistance among them.

**Conclusion:** The present study will provide the clinicians an update on high prevalence of multi-drug resistant isolates in the critical care units of the hospital.

**Keywords:** Blood stream infections, Critical care units, Multi-drug resistance

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Quick Response Code:	Website: <a href="http://www.innovativepublication.com">www.innovativepublication.com</a>
	DOI: 10.5958/2394-5478.2016.00059.5

identification of the causative pathogen and start of appropriate treatment can significantly reduce the morbidity, hospital stay and mortality among patients with BSIs.

This study was carried out in our hospital which is attached to a medical college in North India to know the spectrum of bacterial pathogens causing BSIs in the patients admitted to the critical care units and also to know the trends of resistance among these agents.

### Introduction

Blood stream infections (BSIs) are an important cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. The condition can be life threatening in critically ill patients in intensive care units (ICUs) of the hospitals. The case fatality rate associated with BSIs in ICU patients is between 35% - 50%<sup>1</sup>. Risk factors contributing to these infections are many but leading causes are intravascular catheters (IVCs), debilitating condition of the patients due to some underlying disease/infection or invasive diagnostic or therapeutic procedures<sup>2-4</sup>.

Emergence of resistance among the bacterial pathogens causing these infections is another issue of the public health concern. Studies have shown that there is a wide range of bacteria, both Gram negative and Gram positive which are associated with this infections<sup>5-8</sup>. The diagnosis of these infections can easily be made with blood culture and since blood is a sterile fluid, the positive predictive value of a blood culture is high. Early

### Material and Methods

**Study design & data collection:** Ours was a hospital based retrospective cross-sectional study carried out in tertiary care hospital of S.G.R.D Institute of Medical Science and Research, Amritsar, North India. The data was collected by reviewing the records of 565 patients admitted to various critical care units (ICUs) of the hospital from May 2015 to March 2016. The samples of these patients were routinely processed for blood culture in the department of Microbiology.

Data collection included age & sex of the patients, the results of the blood culture and antimicrobial sensitivity testing (AST).

Blood samples were collected from the patients taking all aseptic & antiseptic measures. For all samples phlebotomy was performed after disinfection of vein puncture site with 70% alcohol followed by 2% tincture iodine. Five of blood was collected for adults and 2 ml

for paediatric age group which was then inoculated in brain heart infusion (BHI) broth 50ml and 10 ml respectively. Blood culture bottles were incubated at 37°C aerobically for 24 hrs followed by subcultures on a blood agar plate and MacConkey's agar. Blood culture broth which did not show any signs of bacterial growth (hemolysis or turbidity) were reported negative after 7 days of incubation, after doing a final subculture. Isolates were identified by Vitek 2 Compact (Biomérieux) using gram negative, gram positive and yeast identification cards and AST cards for sensitivity. Antibiotic sensitivity results were interpreted as per CLSI guidelines.

**Ethical approval:** The study was conducted after getting ethical approval from the ethical committee of the institution.

**Statistical analysis:** For statistical analysis SPSS version 17.0 software and MS excel 2007 were used. We also used Chi-square test to know the association between the variable.

## Results

A total of 565 blood samples of the patients suspected of bacteremia, admitted to critical care units of the hospital were processed routinely for blood culture in the department of Microbiology from May 2015 to March 2016. Out of these patients 379 were (67%) were males. Male to female ratio was approximately 2:1. Medium age of the patients was 43 years with a range

from 1 day to 85 years. In our study total no of positive blood culture was 140. Out of these isolates 74(53%) were Gram positive bacteria (GPB) and 55(39.3%) were Gram negative bacteria (GNB) and 11(7.9%) were non-albicans Candida (Fig. 1).

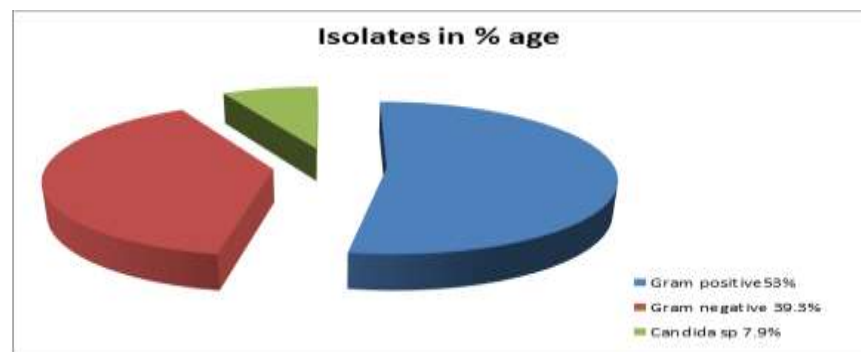
The predominant bacterial isolate were Coagulase negative *staphylococcus* (CoNS) 49 (34.5%) followed by *Acinetobacter* 22 (15.4%) and *Staphylococcus aureus* 20 (14%) (Fig. 2, Table 1). In addition there were 11 isolates of Candida species, all non albicans with *Candida utilis* (9) being the predominant species followed by *Candida tropicalis* (2). All blood stream infections were due to a single organism only.

**Antibiotic susceptibility patterns:** Antibiotic resistance patterns of the isolates recovered from blood cultures is shown in Fig 3&4. Among Gram positive bacterial isolates, 100% isolates of CONS and *Enterococcus* and 85% isolates of *Staphylococcus aureus* were resistant to penicillin and oxacillin. However most of the GPB were sensitive to teichoplanin, daptomycin and linezolid and 100% were sensitive to vancomycin (Fig. 3).

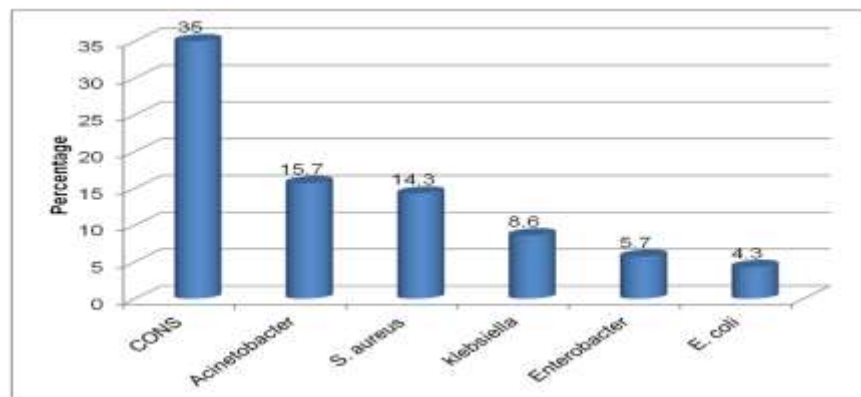
Among Gram negative bacterial isolates, *Acinetobacter* and *Klebsiella* were dominant species in descending order. Third generation cephalosporins showed a very weak activity against them. carbapenem resistance was detected in 64% isolates of *Acinetobacter spp.* and in 92% of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. 100% strains of both species were multidrug resistant (MDR). However most of their strains were sensitive to both tegicycline and colistin (Fig. 4).

**Table 1: Showing age wise frequency of bacterial isolates recovered from patients with BSI**

Age of patient	Number and % of organism isolated									
	Gram positive cocci (53%)			Gram negative bacilli (39.3%)						Candida
	<i>CoNS</i> (49) 35%	<i>S.aureus</i> (20) 14.3%	<i>Enterococcus</i> (5) 3.6%	<i>Acinetobacter</i> (22) 15.7%	<i>Klebsiella</i> (12) 8.6%	<i>Enterobacter</i> (8) 5.6%	<i>E. coli</i> (6) 4.3%	<i>Pseudomonas</i> (5) 3.6%	<i>Burkholderia cepacia</i> (2) 1.4%	<i>Non albican</i> 11(7.9%)
<28 days	29	11	5	13	8	8	2	1	2	9
<5 yrs	6	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2
5-15 yrs	7	4	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	0
>15 yrs	7	3	0	4	2	0	3	3	0	0



**Fig. 1: Pie chart showing % age distribution of Bacterial isolates recovered from patients with BSI**



**Fig. 2: Graph showing frequency of bacterial isolates recovered from patients with BSI**



among them. CoNS and Enterococcus spp isolates showed higher level of resistance to beta-lactam antibiotics than Staphylococcus aureus. However all the three were sensitive to vancomycin which is similar to other studies<sup>12,21</sup>.

Most of the Gram-negative bacteria were MDR with a very high resistance to beta-lactam antibiotics. Among Gram negative bacterial isolates, *Acinetobacter* and *Klebsiella* were dominant species. Third generation cephalosporins showed a very weak activity against them. Carbapenem resistance was detected in 64% isolates of *Acinetobacter spp.* and in 92% of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. This might be due to inappropriate empirical use of meropenem as the first line treatment. As many as 8% isolates of *klebsiella spp* and 12% of *Enterobacter spp* were even resistant to colistin.

### Conclusion

The present study showed prevalence of multi-drug resistant isolates in critical care patients and this limits the therapeutic options. It implies that blood cultures must always be done in all cases of suspected bacteremia and septicemia and once the sensitivity pattern of the isolate is known de-escalation of the high-end antimicrobials should be considered to reduce the antimicrobial pressure. Moreover stringent hospital infection control measures and a good antibiotic policy for the hospital is the need of the hour.

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**How to cite this article:** Gill MK, Sharma S. Bacteriological profile and antibiotic resistance pattern in blood stream infection in critical care units of a tertiary care hospital in North India. *Indian J Microbiol Res* 2016;3(3):270-274.