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Cord Blood Troponin I Levels: Biomarker Evidence of Fetal Cardiac Injury in Intrahepatic Cholestasis of Pregnancy

Objective: The purpose was to determine whether cord blood troponin I levels are increased in fetuses born to mothers diagnosed with intrahepatic cholestasis of pregnancy (ICP).

Study Design: A prospective case-control study was performed at a single institution (2017-2019), enrolling 87 pregnant patients with ICP (TBA $\geq 11 \mu mol/L$) as cases and 122 randomly selected asymptomatic pregnant patients (TBA $< 11 \mu mol/L$) as controls. Cord blood Troponin I was collected at delivery in both groups using a commercially available chemiluminescent immunoassay. Values $\leq 0.04 ng/ml$ were negative; > 0.04 ng/ml were positive. Fisher exact and t-tests compared social and obstetrical variables (p< 0.05 significant). A stratification by TBA range $< 40 \mu mol/L$, $40-100 \mu mol/L$, and $>100 \mu mol/L$ assessed the relationship between ICP severity (by fetal demise risk, with TBA $>100 \mu mol/L$ most at risk) and likelihood of positive Troponin I. Finally, logistic regression determined if TBA $\geq 11 \mu mol/L$ predicted elevated Troponin and fetal acidosis.

Results: Demographics and obstetrical outcomes are in Table 1. Mean gestational age at delivery: 38.96 ± 1.47 (controls) vs. 37.71 ± 1.59 weeks (cases, p<0.001). Mean TBA: 5.2 ± 1.28 ng/ml (controls) vs. 43.2 ± 40.62 ng/ml (cases, p<0.001). Cord blood Troponin I was positive in 15/122 (12.3%) controls and 20/87 (22.99%) cases (p<0.001). Stratified by TBA <40, 40-100, >100, higher TBA correlated with positive Troponin I (p=0.002, Table 2). Adjusting for gestational age, maternal age, and BMI, higher TBA predicted positive Troponin I (aOR 1.015, 95% CI 1.004-1.026, Table 3).

Conclusion: Stratified by TBA, analysis confirmed positive Troponin I was more likely with higher TBA. TBA $\geq 11 \mu$ mol/L predicted positive Troponin I. Though no stillbirths in our cohort, findings confirm potential fetal cardiac injury from high TBA exposure via elevated cord blood Troponin I at birth.