

## Prophylactic antibiotics for variceal hemorrhage: Clostridium difficile infection still can be a risk

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### Abstract

Brown *et al* presented a retrospective study regarding the prophylactic use of antibiotics for variceal hemorrhage. Antibiotics appeared to improve the survival rate of patients without increasing clostridium difficile infection (CDI). We argue against the conclusion of the authors and consider that this result may be simply due to concurrent use of metronidazole, a therapeutic agent against CDI.

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**Key words:** Variceal hemorrhage; Prophylactic antibiotics; Clostridium difficile infection

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### TO THE EDITOR

Brown *et al*<sup>[1]</sup> presented a retrospective study regarding prophylactic use of antibiotics in treatment of variceal hemorrhage. The data show that antibiotics appear to improve the survival rate of patients without increasing Clostridium difficile infection (CDI). However, 70.3% of the patients who were given antibiotics received metronidazole, a therapeutic agent against CDI. No apparent increase in CDI may be simply due to the suppression of the organism by metronidazole. As pointed out in the article, currently recommended antibiotic for this purpose is ceftriaxone<sup>[2,3]</sup>, which is known to predispose to CDI<sup>[4]</sup>. The result of the article should not be interpreted as the currently recommended use of ceftriaxone posing a low risk of CDI.

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