



CBNAAT Emerging as Rapid molecular Diagnostic tool in Pulmonary & Extrapulmonary T.B.

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Abstract

Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification test is a rapid molecular diagnostic tool which has revolutionized the TB diagnosis. Gold Standard of TB diagnosis is demonstration of M.TB either on microscopy or culture / Line Probe Assay Rapid. Rapid detection of M.TB by this method has replaced the microscopy / culture etc. Rifampicin resistance detection is extra advantage of this method. Our studies conforms with other studies in India.

Keywords: CBNAAT, Tuberculosis, Pulmonary TB, Extrapulmonary TB, Molecular diagnosis.

Introduction

Tuberculosis is a major health problem in India. Extrapulmonary tuberculosis makes up about 15-20 % of all T.B. cases but his number may climb up to 35-40 % among those whose immune systems are compromised such as person living with HIV or undergoing certain medical treatment. Extrapulmonary can be difficult to detect & treat. Lymph nodes sometimes presenting with swollen glands, persistent fever & weight loss.

The gold standard of T.B. diagnosis remains the demonstration of Acid-Fast Bacilli on smear microscopy or conventional culture on solid media (3-8 weeks) or broth media (1-2 weeks) & Line probe assay (LPA) typically takes 24-48 hours.

In recent years CBNAAT has emerged as a rapid molecular diagnostic tool for early accurate detection

of T.B. & Rifampicin resistance. It has replaced the smear microscopy. Conventional diagnostic techniques such as ZN staining & microscopy lack sensitivity especially in paucibacillary & extrapulmonary T.B. while culture for M. TB is time consuming.

Incorporating CBNAAT, histopathology & AFB culture is best approach for diagnosis of extrapulmonary TB.

CBNAAT (Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification) has revolutionized TB diagnosis by offering.

- Rapid detection (Approx 2 hours only).
- High Sensitivity in paucibacillary sample.
- Detection of Rifampicin resistance.

Objective

To analyse the performance & diagnostic yield of CBNAAT in Pulmonary & Extrapulmonary T.B over a period of 35 months & compare our findings with previous published literatures.

Materials & Methods:**Study Design and Setting**

A retrospective observational study was conducted at SNMMCH, Dhanbad, a tertiary care teaching hospital.

Study materials assessing – CBNAAT data generated FNAC lymph node, sputum for pulmonary

samples, FNAC (Pus), Body fluids (Ascitic, Pleural, CSF, Bronchoalveolar lavage) samples received from OPD, inpatient & referred cases of suspected TB.

Study Duration – Jan -2023 – Nov -2025 (35 months) Sample size total – 15,159 cases

Pulmonary sample – Sputum. (13,838)

Extra Pulmonary sample – (1,321) FNAC for L. N. (Pus), Pleural Fluid, Ascitic fluid BAL & C.S.F.

Diagnostic Instruments – CBNAAT Machine with Reporting on computer.

Photo**Methods-**

- 1) First we add sample reagent to fresh sputum in 2:1.
- 2) Shake it than let it stand for 10 minutes.
- 3) Shake then stand further for 5 minutes.
- 4) With pasteur's pipette transfer the solution to cartridge. Then cartridge is loaded in cepheid GeneXpert machine.

- 5) In 2 hours, we saw the results on computer screen.

Results

In pulmonary samples out of 13,838 – 2,367 cases were positive 17.1 %. In Extra pulmonary TB- Out of 1,321 sample 206 week positive I.C 15.6 %.

Total 15,159 cases showed 2,573 I-C 16.9 % + Ve FNAC (Pus) Samples showed highest diagnostic yield.

Overall performance in our study aligns well with previously published data- Reinforcing its role as an essential diagnostic modality in routine TB work up.

Discussion

In our study positivity for pulmonary TB was 17.1 % which is comparable to previously published studies in India ranging from 15-25 %.

In Extrapulmonary TB- Positivity rate was slightly lower. It may be due to.

- i. Lower bacillary load.
 - ii. Variable sample quality.
 - iii. Presence of PCR inhibitory in body fluid
- years wise distribution of +Ve cases of pulmonary TB showed gradual increase with highest number detected in Nov-2025. Year wise distribution of Extrapulmonary TB also showed progressive ride.

CBNAAT has emerged as a powerful diagnostic tool as it reduces diagnostic delay & helps in early treatment initiation due to ability to detect rifampicin resistance. Our Findings reinforce WHO recommendations advocating CBNAAT as a frontline diagnostic tool in TB endemic area.

Conclusion

CBNAAT is a reliable & rapid diagnostic tool for both pus & Extrapulmonary TB & particularly valuable in smear negative cases, early granulomatous lymphadenitis, cases requiring rapid rifampicin resistance screening. It offers significant advantages over conventional technique especially in paucibacillary cases.

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