3.01 Biochemical Classification of Pleural Effusions: Are We Doing It Light?

Julia Ulm¹, Laura Gleeson^{1,2}

¹School of Medicine, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland. ²Department of Respiratory Medicine, St. James's Hospital, Dublin, Ireland

Background: Light's criteria classify pleural effusions as transudates or exudates, guiding investigation and management. In practice, required biochemical tests to determine Light's criteria are not always requested and limited data is used to approximate. **Methods**: Pleural fluid specimens in SJH cytology laboratory from 2019 to 2023 were included. Serum and fluid protein and LDH were recorded and Light's criteria determined. Congruency between Fluid/Serum LDH Ratio (F/SLR) and Fluid LDH/ULN Serum LDH Ratio (F/ULR) was examined. **Results**: 297/1203 (25%) specimens had all data to assess Light's criteria. Light's criteria require one criterion of three be fulfilled to classify an exudative; thus, 506/1203 (42%) had sufficient data to classify the effusion. Of 906 specimens with incomplete data, serum LDH was most frequently missing (78%). F/ULR is sometimes presumed to reflect likelihood of F/SLR meeting Light's criteria to classify an exudate. In 297 specimens, Light's classification based upon F/ULR and F/SLR was incongruent in 50/297 (17%), with 38/297 (13%) classified as exudates based upon F/ SLR but not F/ULR.**Conclusions**: Less than half of pleural fluid specimens had sufficient data available for classification. Using F/ULR as a surrogate for F/SLR risks misclassification. **Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.