

Reviewer 1 v.1

Comments to the Author

The authors have presented a manuscript comparing the diagnostic accuracy of EBUS-TBNA using slow-pull capillary technique or suction technique for diagnosis of diseases involving hilar and/or mediastinal lymphadenopathy at their institution. They conducted a retrospective study that assessed the accuracy, sensitivity, specificity, negative predictive value (NPV), and positive predictive value (PPV) of the suction and slow-pull capillary techniques for patients undergoing EBUS-TBNA for lymphadenopathy on a relatively small sample size. They report that the diagnostic performance of the slow-pull capillary technique was significantly better compared to the suction technique and an excellent safety profile for both techniques. The slow-pull capillary technique was also associated with significantly better diagnostic accuracy in both univariate and multivariate analysis. The authors conclude that the slow-pull capillary technique in EBUS-TBNA can significantly increase the accuracy and sensitivity related to diagnosing diseases involving hilar and/or mediastinal LN enlargement.

Reviewer comments:

1. Results: Fig 1 – can include also the number of patients who had slow-pull capillary technique or suction technique.
2. Results: Table 1, For final diagnosis, can the authors add % next to the n of patients. This will give more meaningful information.
3. Results: Table 3 – In addition to overall diagnostic performance of slow-pull capillary technique and suction technique, can the authors compare the diagnostic accuracy of the two techniques for malignant and benign conditions. Although the numbers will be small, this can provide additional important information and content to the study.
4. Can the difference in diagnostic accuracy be explained by the fact that 20% of the suction patients had malignant diagnosis compared to 70% of the slow-pull capillary patients, something the authors speculate about in the discussion, however they have not undertaken this analysis. If this is the case what is the clinical relevance and the validity of the study, provided that patients with malignancies are underrepresented in the suction group.

To be publishable, this paper would need a major rewrite, and a good argument about the clinical relevance and validity of the findings derived from a relatively small and heterogeneous sample size and their applicability and relevance to clinical practice.

All the best with your team efforts.