Total bilirubin in nasogastric aspirate

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Sir,

The recent report on total bilirubin in nasogastric aspirate is very interesting.[1] In a study by Miyano *et al*. reported that this test is "useful as a reliable objective quantitative marker of gastrointestinal motility post-operatively".[1] In fact, this new though is very interesting and should be applaudable. However, there are many considerations in laboratory medicine to be addressed. First, nasogastric aspirate has several compositions and those compositions might disturb the biochemical reaction in measurement of total bilirubin. In addition, the specimen preparation for measurement, clearance of contamination, seems to be difficult for automated clinical chemistry analyser use. Second, source of bilirubin can also be from haemolysis. If there is concurrent haemolysis, such as underlying haemoglobin defect, the aberrant result can be expected.

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