

BMJ Open

Comparison of the prognostic values of inflammation markers in patients with acute pancreatitis

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2016-013206
Article Type:	Research
Date Submitted by the Author:	26-Jun-2016
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Primary Subject Heading:	Gastroenterology and hepatology
Secondary Subject Heading:	Diagnostics
Keywords:	acute pancreatitis, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio, prognostic nutritional index, red cell distribution width, mortality, inflammation markers

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3 **Comparison of the prognostic values of inflammation markers in patients with**
4 **acute pancreatitis**
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43 **Short title:** Inflammation markers and acute pancreatitis
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ABSTRACT

Objective: Inflammation-based prognostic markers (neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio [NLR], prognostic nutritional index [PNI], red cell distribution width [RDW], lymphocyte-monocyte ratio [LMR], and mean platelet volume [MPV] are associated with overall survival (OS) in some diseases. This study assessed their prognostic value in acute pancreatitis (AP) mortality.

Design: A retrospective analysis.

Setting: Patients with AP were recruited in the emergency department and healthy individuals were recruited in healthcare centre in our hospital.

Participants: A total of 359 AP patients (31 non-survivors) and 187 healthy individuals were enrolled.

Primary and secondary outcome measures: Biochemistry and haematology results of the first test after admission were collected. Mortality prediction ability was evaluated using receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves. OS was evaluated using the Kaplan–Meier method, with differences compared using the log-rank test. Independent relationships of mortality with each predictor were estimated in Cox proportional hazard models.

Results: Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors had higher RDW ($p<0.001$), MPV ($p=0.007$), and NLR ($p<0.001$), and lower LMR ($p<0.001$) and PNI ($p<0.001$). NLR had the largest area under the ROC curve (0.823, $p<0.001$), with a 16.69 cut-off, 83.9% sensitivity, and 74.4% specificity. Age ($p=0.005$), NLR ($p=0.048$), PNI ($p=0.025$), C reactive protein ($p=0.001$), and RDW ($p<0.001$) were independently associated with OS.

Conclusions: NLR was the most powerful marker of OS in this patient series.

Strengths and limitations of this study

■ Compared with survivors of acute pancreatitis (AP), non-survivors had higher red

cell distribution width (RDW), mean platelet volume (MPV), and neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR), and lower lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR) and prognostic nutritional index (PNI).

- NLR exhibited a significantly higher area under the receiver operating characteristic curve for the prediction of mortality compared with other markers.
- Age, NLR, PNI, C reactive protein, and RDW were independently associated with overall survival in AP.
- This was a retrospective analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Acute pancreatitis (AP) is a rapid-onset inflammation of the pancreas and that varies in severity from self-limiting mild illness to rapidly progressive multiple organ failure. Statistics suggest that 10–20% of patients with AP develop severe acute pancreatitis (SAP),¹ which usually has a dreadful evolution associated to a poor prognosis.^{2 3} Prediction of disease severity can guide the management of patients with AP and improve their outcome. Organ failure and infected pancreatic necrosis are common causes of mortality in such patients,⁴ and a new international multidisciplinary classification of SAP incorporates both events as determinants of severity.⁵ The predictive values of various markers, such as Evaluation II (APACHE II), Bedside Index of Severity in Acute Pancreatitis (BISAP) scores, C-reactive protein (CRP), and procalcitonin, have been previously assessed.⁶⁻⁸ A systematic review⁹ concluded it was justifiable to use blood urea nitrogen after 48 h of hospital admission for predicting persistent organ failure, and procalcitonin for predicting infected pancreatic necrosis in patients with confirmed pancreatic necrosis. In clinical studies, no reliable predictor of persistent organ failure within 48 h of admission has been identified. However, most studies have focused on disease severity, and only a few have directly investigated the relationship between predictors and mortality of AP.

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There is increasing evidence that presence of a systemic inflammatory response is associated with poor survival in patients with various aetiologies, including malignancy.¹⁰⁻¹⁷ Many direct or combined markers of systemic inflammation are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available laboratory tests. Mean platelet volume (MPV),¹⁰ red cell distribution width (RDW),¹¹ neutrophil–lymphocyte ratio (NLR), platelet–lymphocyte ratio (PLR), prognostic nutritional index (PNI),¹² and lymphocyte–monocyte ratio (LMR)¹⁷ have been used to predict the prognosis of disease. Increased MPV after admission to the intensive care unit (ICU) was found to be independently associated with increased in-hospital mortality,¹⁰ and RDW was found to be an independent marker of short- and long-term prognosis in ICU.¹¹ NLR at admission served as an independent predictor of 3-month mortality rates in acute-on-chronic liver failure patients.¹³ PLR was a significant independent prognostic marker in patients with resected pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma.¹⁴ Increased pretreatment LMR was associated with a significantly more favourable prognosis in patients with solid tumours.¹⁷ Despite this evidence, very few studies have focused on the direct relationship between inflammation-based prognostic markers and mortality of AP. A cross-sectional study found a significant association between RDW and mortality in patients with AP.¹⁸ Another study¹⁹ investigated the prognostic value of NLR in AP and determined an optimal ratio for prediction of severity. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to simultaneously compare the prognostic value of these inflammation-based prognostic markers (NLR, PNI, C-reactive protein [CRP], RDW, LMR, MPV, and PLR) of mortality in patients with AP.

56 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

This retrospective analysis consecutively enrolled a series of patients with AP who were admitted to the emergency department of our hospital between 1 July 2013 and 18 August 2015. A diagnosis of acute pancreatitis required two of three features: (1) prolonged abdominal pain characteristic of AP, (2) threefold elevation of serum amylase and/or lipase levels above the normal range, and (3) characteristic findings of AP on abdominal ultrasonography and/or computed tomography scan.¹ Mild acute pancreatitis (MAP) was defined as absence of organ failure and absence of local or systemic complications.¹ Moderately severe acute pancreatitis (MSAP) was defined as no evidence of persistent organ failure, but presence of local or systemic complications and/or organ failure that resolved within 48 h. SAP was defined as persistent organ failure (>48 h).¹ Patients with recurrent pancreatitis were enrolled only at first admission. Patients with traumatic pancreatitis, autoimmune pancreatitis, diabetes mellitus, tumour, or liver failure were excluded. All enrolled patients were followed up for 100 days or until death. Healthy controls matched for age and sex, without chronic diseases or abnormal physical examination results, were also recruited from the physical examination centre.

Ethics statement

Each participant gave written informed consent after being provided with an explanation of the study. The Ethics Committee of The First Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University College of Medicine approved the consent procedure and experiment periods. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the Helsinki Declaration.

Demographic information and laboratory analysis

Demographic information, including age, sex, aetiology, and complication, was collected from medical records. Complete blood counts (CBCs) with differentials were performed in samples of peripheral blood collected in ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) anticoagulant tubes with an XE-2100 haematology autoanalyzer (Sysmex Corporation, Kobe, Japan). White blood cell count (WBC), neutrophil count, lymphocyte count, monocyte count, platelet count (PLT), RDW, and MPV were obtained during the emergency visit, with a turnaround time of less than 30 min. Additional laboratory data, including albumin, CRP, and amylase, were obtained within 12 h of admission using a Hitachi 7600 chemistry analyser (Hitachi High-Technologies, Tokyo, Japan) and Roche reagents (Roche Diagnostics, Indianapolis, IN, USA).

We assessed the prognostic value of general inflammation-based prognostic markers (NLR, PNI, CRP, RDW, LMR, MPV, and PLR) for predicting the mortality of AP. MPV and RDW were obtained directly from the CBCs. NLR, PLR, and LMR were ratios of two types of blood cell. $PNI = \text{albumin (g/l)} + 5 \times \text{total lymphocyte count (10}^9\text{/l)}$.

Statistical analysis

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests were used to determine whether continuous variables were normally distributed. Based on the result, continuous variables were expressed as either mean \pm standard deviation (SD), or median and range. Categorical variables were expressed as numbers. The significance of differences in sex and aetiology were compared using the χ^2 test. The significance of differences in the haematology and biochemistry results obtained in healthy

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3 participants, and in patients with MAP, MSAP, and SAP, were determined using
4 one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for normally distributed variables, and the
5 Kruskal–Wallis H test for non-normally distributed variables. The significance of
6 differences in haematology and biochemistry results between non-survivors and
7 survivors of AP were determined using an independent sample *t*-test for normally
8 distributed variables and Mann–Whitney U test for non-normally distributed variables.
9 Similar statistical methods were used to determine the between-group differences (e.g.,
10 healthy control *vs.* MAP; MAP *vs.* MSAP; MSAP *vs.* SAP). Receiver operator
11 characteristic (ROC) curves were plotted, and areas under the ROC curves (AUCs)
12 were calculated to evaluate the discrimination threshold of each marker. Appropriate
13 cut-off points for the optimal combination of sensitivity and specificity were
14 determined using the Youden index. AP patients were stratified into groups by cut-off
15 values. Overall survival (OS) curves were calculated using the Kaplan–Meier method,
16 and differences in survival rates were compared using the log-rank test. Univariate
17 and multivariate Cox proportional hazard models were used to estimate the
18 significance and independence of the relationship of each inflammation-based
19 prognostic marker and mortality. Hazard ratios (HRs) and 95% confidence intervals
20 (CIs) of each independent risk factor were calculated. Age, NLR, PNI, CRP, RDW,
21 LMR, MPV, and PLR were included in this model. A *p*-value <0.05 was considered
22 statistically significant. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS version 19.0
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51 RESULTS

52 Patient characteristics

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3 A total of 546 individuals (197 MAP, 76 MSAP, 86 SAP, and 187 healthy control
4 participants) were enrolled in the study. Forty-five patients with traumatic pancreatitis
5 (n=1), autoimmune pancreatitis (n=5), diabetes mellitus (n=7), tumour (n=7), liver
6 failure (n=2), or incomplete medical records or who were lost to follow-up (n=23)
7 were excluded from the analysis. Tables 1 and 2 show the baseline characteristics of
8 the patients. There were no significant differences in age (p=0.454) or sex (p=0.981)
9 among the four groups (MAP, MSAP, SAP, and healthy participants). There were
10 significant differences in RDW (p<0.001), NLR (p<0.001), PLR (p<0.001), LMR
11 (p<0.001), and PNI (p<0.001) among the four groups. The three AP groups did not
12 differ significantly in aetiology (p=0.875). As the illness worsened, CRP, RDW, and
13 NLR gradually increased, but PNI decreased (all p<0.05; Table 1). PLR (p=0.026)
14 and MPV (p=0.017) increased significantly and LMR decreased significantly
15 (p<0.001) in MSAP as compared with MAP patients. PLR (p=0.863), MPV (p=0.076),
16 and LMR (p=0.883) were not significantly different in MSAP and SAP patients.
17 Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors were older (p=0.001) and had higher
18 WBC (p=0.001), CRP (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.010), RDW (p<0.001), MPV
19 (p=0.007), and NLR (p<0.001). Conversely, lymphocyte count (p<0.001), PLT
20 (p=0.001), albumin (p<0.001), LMR (p<0.001), and PNI (p<0.001) were lower in
21 non-survivors than in survivors.
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48 **Discrimination thresholds**

49 ROC curves were constructed to evaluate the ability of each marker to predict
50 mortality in AP (Fig. 1). Table 3 shows the AUCs and optimal cut-off values. An area
51 of 1.0 indicates perfect discrimination, 0.90 to 1.0 is excellent, 0.80 to <0.90 is good,
52 0.70 to <0.80 is fair, and <0.70 is poor.^{20 21} Thus, the ability of NLR to predict
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3 mortality (AUC=0.823, $p<0.001$) was good; those of PNI (AUC=0.781, $p<0.001$),
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5 CRP (AUC=0.762, $p<0.001$), RDW (AUC=0.742, $p<0.001$), and LMR (AUC=0.710,
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7 $p<0.001$) were fair; and that of MPV (AUC=0.645, $p=0.007$) was poor. PLR was not
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9 able to predict mortality in AP ($p=0.059$). For NLR, the optimal cut-off value for
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11 mortality prediction was 16.69, with a specificity of 83.9%, sensitivity of 74.4%,
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13 positive likelihood ratio (+LR) of 3.28, and negative likelihood ratio (-LR) of 0.22.
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16 17 18 19 **Survival analysis**

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21 Kaplan–Meier survival curves demonstrate the relationships between
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23 inflammation-based prognostic markers and OS of patients with AP (Fig. 2A–G).
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25 Elevated NLR ($p<0.001$), CRP ($p<0.001$), RDW ($p<0.001$), MPV ($p=0.002$), and PLR
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27 ($p=0.006$) were associated with increased probability of death. Conversely, decreased
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29 PNI ($p<0.001$) and LMR ($p<0.001$) were associated with decreased OS.
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33 Univariate analysis and Cox regression revealed that age ($p=0.001$), NLR
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35 ($p<0.001$), PNI ($p<0.001$), CRP ($p<0.001$), RDW ($p<0.001$), LMR ($p=0.001$), and
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37 MPV ($p=0.010$) were associated with AP mortality (Table 4). The factors significant
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39 in univariate analysis were evaluated by multivariate Cox regression. Age (HR=1.043,
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41 95% CI: 1.013–1.073, $p=0.005$), NLR (HR=1.029, 95% CI: 1.000–1.058, $p=0.048$),
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43 PNI (HR=0.927, 95% CI: 0.868–0.990, $p=0.025$), CRP (HR=1.006, 95% CI:
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45 1.002–1.009, $p=0.001$), and RDW (HR=1.354, 95% CI: 1.165–1.573, $p<0.001$) were
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47 independently associated with OS (Table 4).
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50 51 52 **DISCUSSION**

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54 AP is an inflammatory disease, with mortality arising mainly from organ failure or
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56 infected pancreatic necrosis.⁴ Our study estimated the prognostic value of various
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3 inflammation-based prognostic markers for predicting mortality of AP. The ability of
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5 the NLR to predict mortality was good, while those of PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR
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7 were fair, and that of MPV was poor. PLR could not predict mortality. Cox regression
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9 revealed that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with OS.
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11 In AP, inflammation propagates and promotes tissue destruction via activation of a
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13 cascade of inflammatory cytokines, proteolytic enzymes, and oxygen free radicals.^{19,22}
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15 Neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes are the three main types of WBCs.
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17 Neutrophils play a key role in development of local tissue destruction and systemic
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19 complications of SAP.²³ Depletion of neutrophils has been associated with improved
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21 prognosis of AP via attenuation of intrapancreatic trypsin activation, abolishment of
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23 acinar cell necrosis, and prevention of lung injury.²³ The percentage of immature
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25 neutrophilic granulocytes might be used clinically as a simple early predictor of an
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27 adverse outcome in SAP.²⁴ Additionally, recent studies revealed that the extent of
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29 lymphopenia was also associated with disease severity.²⁵⁻²⁷ Lymphopenia has been
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31 reported to have independent prognostic value for some diseases,^{19,26-29} including AP.
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33 Takeyama *et al.* found that impairment of cellular immunity caused by peripheral
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35 lymphocyte apoptosis was linked to subsequent development of infectious
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37 complications in AP.²⁸ Monocytes produce various cytokines and inflammatory
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39 mediators that further amplify inflammatory cell recruitment into the pancreas, as well
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41 as distant organs such as the lungs.³⁰ Similar to neutrophils, a protective effect was
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43 also found by depleting macrophages in a mouse model of cerulein-induced AP.³¹
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45 Theoretically, NLR and LMR, which combine two opposing parameters, should be
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47 more accurate than either parameter alone. In fact, we found that NLR had the
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49 greatest prognostic value of all the factors we evaluated. Despite this, it is important
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51 to apply it with caution in clinical settings. Broad-spectrum antibiotics with good
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3 tissue penetration, which are essential medicines in the treatment of SAP, can affect
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5 WBC by reducing inflammation. Thus, the prognostic value of NLR in AP is
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7 uncertain if the effect of antibiotic treatment is not taken into account.³² For this
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9 reason, the neutrophil and lymphocyte counts used in this study were from the first
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11 CBCs, conducted during the emergency visit. We confirmed that more than half of the
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13 enrolled patients were untreated at that time; consequently, our results are most likely
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15 applicable to untreated patients. Unlike for NLR, a significant decrease of LMR was
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17 observed in SAP and MSAP compared with MAP patients, but the decreases observed
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19 in patients with MSAP and SAP showed no statistically significant differences. In
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21 addition, the predictive ability of LMR was only fair, and was not independently
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23 associated with OS in AP.
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28 Serum albumin is a negative acute phase response reactant, and it reflects the
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30 body's nutritional status. Albumin <25 g/l was an independent prognostic factor
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32 related to the poor prognosis of AP.³³ The variation of albumin within 24 h has been
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34 identified as a risk factor for poor prognosis of critically ill patients in the early stages
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36 of SAP.³⁴ The PNI, which includes serum albumin and lymphocyte count, is an
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38 independent predictor of poor overall survival in patients with hepatocellular
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40 carcinoma.³⁵ To the best of our knowledge, few studies have reported the application
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42 of PNI for predicting mortality of AP, but we found that it was an independent
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44 prognostic factor and had the second largest AUC of the factors we investigated.
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49 Numerous studies have reported RDW as a strong, independent prognostic factor in
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51 various diseases and conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, rheumatoid arthritis,
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53 cancer, and critical illnesses.^{18 36-38} Our results are consistent with the study by Yao J
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55 *et al.*¹⁸, who reported a significant association between RDW and mortality of patients
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57 with AP. We also found the predictive ability of NLR, PNI, and CRP to be superior to
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3 that of RDW, even though all four markers were independently associated with OS.
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5 The mechanisms underlying the association between RDW and mortality in AP
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7 remain unclear. The obvious metabolic abnormalities in non-survivors of AP,
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9 including inflammation, oxidative stress, poor nutritional status and persistent organ
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11 failure, lead to deregulation of red blood cell homeostasis involving both impaired
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13 erythropoiesis and abnormal red blood cell survival.³⁸ RDW reflects these
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15 impairments in homeostasis, but only further research can confirm this speculation.
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19 Vascular thrombosis and systemic hypercoagulability are two complications of AP.
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21 As expected, PLT is involved in these complications, but the pathophysiological
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23 mechanism is not clear. An increase in MPV indicates platelet activation and has been
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25 associated with thrombotic diseases, but the relationship between MPV and AP is a
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27 topic of controversy. Two studies reported that MPV was significantly higher in
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29 patients with AP at admission than in healthy controls ($p<0.05$ ¹⁸ and $p=0.005$ ³⁹), and
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31 that MPV was significantly higher in patients with SAP than in those with MAP
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33 ($p<0.05$).¹⁸ In contrast, Beyazit *et al.* found that MPV decreased in AP ($p<0.001$).⁴⁰
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35 Interestingly, we found that MPV was significantly higher in patients with SAP and
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37 MSAP than in those with MAP ($p<0.05$) and there was no significant difference in
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39 MPV in SAP and MSAP. MPV has poor ability to discriminate survival status in AP
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41 (AUC=0.645, $p=0.007$), and it was not an independent prognostic factor related to
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43 mortality ($p=0.389$). However, MPV's limited predictive value does not reduce the
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45 importance of MPV determination in laboratory evaluation of AP.^{41 42} MPV
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47 reportedly increases over time in samples collected in tubes with EDTA anticoagulant,
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49 and the increase was found proportional to the interval between sample collection and
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51 laboratory analysis.⁴² Therefore, for reliable MPV determination, it is recommended
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53 that the time between sample collection and laboratory analyses be less than 2 h.⁴² In
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our study, MPV was determined in blood samples drawn during emergency admission, and turnaround time was less than 30 min; thus, we believe our results are reliable. Unfortunately, MPV of healthy controls was measured 2 h after venipuncture, and we decided not to include those results in this study. PLR also related to PLT but it was not an independent predictor of OS. Both platelet and lymphocyte counts decreased in SAP patients and in non-survivors of AP, so PLR did not have significant predictive value.

The prognostic markers evaluated in this study are direct or combined markers of systemic inflammation that are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available laboratory tests. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to compare the prognostic value of these markers for predicting mortality in patients with AP. Some potential limitations of the current study should be noted. This was a retrospective, single-centre study; a larger, prospective study is needed to validate these results. Additionally, we only described the association of each of the predictors with mortality of AP; the underlying mechanisms need to be investigated.

In conclusion, we found that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with OS of AP. NLR was found to be the strongest predictor of mortality.

Acknowledgments

We thank Edanz Group Ltd. for helping edit the English of the final manuscript.

Contributors

R.G. and Y.L. designed the experiments. R.G. and Y.L. contributed to the data collection. Y.Z. conducted the data analysis. Y.L., R.G and L.F. wrote the manuscript.

All the authors reviewed the manuscript.

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5 **Funding** This work was financially supported by grants from the Zhejiang Provincial
6
7 Natural Science Foundation of China (LY15H190002) and the Department of
8
9 Education Foundation of Zhejiang Province, China (Y201330146).
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14 **Competing interests** None declared.
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19 **Patient consent** Obtained.
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23 **Ethics approval** This study was approved by the ethics committee of the First
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25 Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China
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30 **Provenance and peer review** Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.
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34 **Data sharing statement** No additional data are available.
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Table 1 Demographics and laboratory findings in patients with acute pancreatitis and in healthy participants

Variable	1. Healthy controls	2. MAP	3. MSAP	4. SAP	1 vs. 2	2 vs. 3	3 vs. 4
Age (years)	49.92 ± 12.78	51.43 ± 16.00	48.47 ± 13.28	50.69 ± 14.61	/	/	
Sex (M/F)	104/83	108/89	41/35	49/37	/	/	/
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)	/	102/24/21/50	39/12/10/15	40/13/12/21	/	/	/
WBC (×10 ⁹ /l)	5.6 (2.5–11.5)	11.5 (3.1–32.0)	14.1 (4.5–36.8)	16.05 (5.9–38.4)	<0.001 ^b	<0.001 ^b	0.278 ^b
Lymphocyte (×10 ⁹ /l)	1.90 (1–4.5)	1.1 (0.2–9.4)	1.0 (0.2–2.6)	0.80 (0.2–2.9)	<0.001 ^b	0.004 ^b	0.089 ^b
PLT (×10 ⁹ /l)	217 (99–375)	202 (21–502)	193 (58–548)	163 (27–540)	0.014 ^b	0.376 ^b	0.046 ^b
Alb (g/l)	46.62 ± 2.95	38.29 ± 5.07	34.38 ± 6.39	29.99 ± 5.35	<0.001 ^a	<0.001 ^a	<0.001 ^a
CRP (mg/l)	/	53.9 (0.7–386)	133.6 (3.2–436.5)	196.1 (27.1–426.7)	/	<0.001 ^b	<0.001 ^b
Amy (U/l)	/	398 (13–5191)	222 (27–3845)	581 (16–2377)	/	0.083 ^b	0.056 ^b
RDW (%)	13.0 (11.8–20.3)	12.8 (11.4–19.2)	13.0 (11.3–16.3)	13.7 (11.7–23.6)	0.013 ^b	0.013 ^b	0.014 ^b
MPV	/	10.52 ± 1.21	10.92 ± 1.32	11.30 ± 1.34	/	0.017 ^a	0.076 ^a
NLR	1.59 (0.73–8.18)	8.46 (1.33–55)	14.60 (1.73–60)	19.65 (3.57–53.67)	<0.001 ^b	<0.001 ^b	0.02 ^b
PLR	110.8 (47.9–303.6)	182 (21.4–990)	201.4 (46.5–931.5)	214.3 (21.2–1073.3)	<0.001 ^b	0.026 ^b	0.863 ^b
LMR	4.83 (1.59–14.12)	1.88 (0.28–13.33)	1.03 (0.29–5.33)	1.14 (0.22–6.32)	<0.001 ^b	<0.001 ^b	0.883 ^b
PNI	56.74 ± 4.26	44.53 ± 6.63	39.36 ± 6.71	34.55 ± 6.02	<0.001 ^a	<0.001 ^a	<0.001 ^a
AP mortality	/	0	0	31	/	/	/

MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; Aetiology (1/2/3/4), 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively. WBC, white blood cell count; PLT, platelet count; Alb, albumin; CRP, C-reactive protein; Amy, amylase; RDW, red cell distribution width; MPV, mean platelet volume; NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; AP, acute pancreatitis.

1 vs. 2 The significance of differences in demographics and laboratory findings between healthy individuals and MAP; 2 vs. 3 The significance of differences in demographics and laboratory findings between MAP and MSAP; 3 vs. 4 The significance of differences in demographics and laboratory findings between MSAP and SAP. ^a independent samples t-test; ^b Mann–Whitney U test.

Table 2 Demographics and laboratory findings in survivors and non-survivors of acute pancreatitis

Variable	Survivors	Non-survivors	p-value
Age (years)	49.84 ± 14.88	58.90 ± 15.60	0.001 ^a
Sex (M/F)	179/149	19/12	0.472 ^b
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)	163/43/40/82	18/6/3/4	0.346 ^b
WBC ($\times 10^9/l$)	12.85 (3.1–38.4)	18.5 (6.5–29.3)	0.001 ^c
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^9/l$)	1.08 (0.17–9.40)	0.60 (0.30–1.60)	<0.001 ^c
PLT ($\times 10^9/l$)	197 (21–548)	159 (27–376)	0.001 ^c
Alb (g/l)	35.95 ± 6.30	30.44 ± 5.54	<0.001 ^a
CRP (mg/l)	98.6 (0.7–436.5)	239.2 (27.1–398.2)	<0.001 ^c
Amy (U/l)	343.5 (13–5191)	909 (16–2377)	0.010 ^c
RDW (%)	13 (11.3–19.2)	13.8 (12.6–23.6)	<0.001 ^c
MPV ¹⁶	10.6 (8.0–14.7)	11.5 (8.9–13.8)	0.007 ^c
NLR	10.47 (1.33–60.0)	25.0 (8.67–53.67)	<0.001 ^c
PLR	194.1 (21.2–1073.3)	228.3 (45.0–736.67)	0.059 ^c
PNI	41.71 ± 7.50	34.00 ± 6.35	<0.001 ^a
LMR	1.51 (0.22–13.33)	1.13 (0.24–2.26)	<0.001 ^c

Aetiology (1/2/3/4), 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiology, respectively. WBC, white blood cell count; PLT, platelet count; Alb, albumin; CRP, C-reactive protein; Amy, amylase; RDW, red cell distribution width; MPV, mean platelet volume; NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio. ^a independent samples *t*-test; ^b χ^2 test; ^c Mann–Whitney U test..

Table 3 Discriminatory ability of inflammation-based prognostic markers

Index	AUC(95% CI)	p-value	Cut-off	Sen%	Spe%	+LR	-LR	PPV%	NPV%
NLR	0.823(0.758–0.889)	<0.001	>16.69	83.9	74.4	3.28	0.22	23.7	98.0
PNI	0.781(0.704–0.858)	<0.001	<33.55	58.1	86.3	4.24	0.49	28.6	95.6
CRP	0.762(0.680–0.844)	<0.001	>162.25	74.2	69.8	2.46	0.37	18.9	96.7
RDW	0.742(0.667–0.817)	<0.001	>12.95	90.3	49.7	1.80	0.20	14.5	98.2
LMR	0.710(0.627–0.794)	<0.001	<1.44	80.6	52.7	1.70	0.37	13.9	96.6
MPV	0.645(0.548–0.743)	0.007	>11.15	61.3	66.8	1.85	0.58	14.9	94.8
PLR	0.603(0.494–0.711)	0.059	>264.5	48.4	74.1	1.88	0.70	15.0	93.8

NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio; MPV, mean platelet volume; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; CI, confidence interval; Sen, sensitivity; Spe, specificity; +LR, positive likelihood ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio; PPV, positive predictive value; NPV, negative predictive value.

Table 4 Prognostic factors of overall survival in patients with AP by univariate and multivariate analyses

Factors	Univariate analysis	Multivariate analysis	
	p value	p value	Hazard ratio(95%CI)
Age	0.001	0.005	1.043(1.013–1.073)
NLR	<0.001	0.048	1.029(1.000–1.058)
PNI	<0.001	0.025	0.927(0.868–0.990)
CRP	<0.001	0.001	1.006(1.002–1.009)
RDW	<0.001	<0.001	1.354(1.165–1.573)
LMR	0.001	0.588	
MPV	0.010	0.389	
PLR	0.123	/	

AP, acute pancreatitis; NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio; MPV, mean platelet volume; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Figure Legends

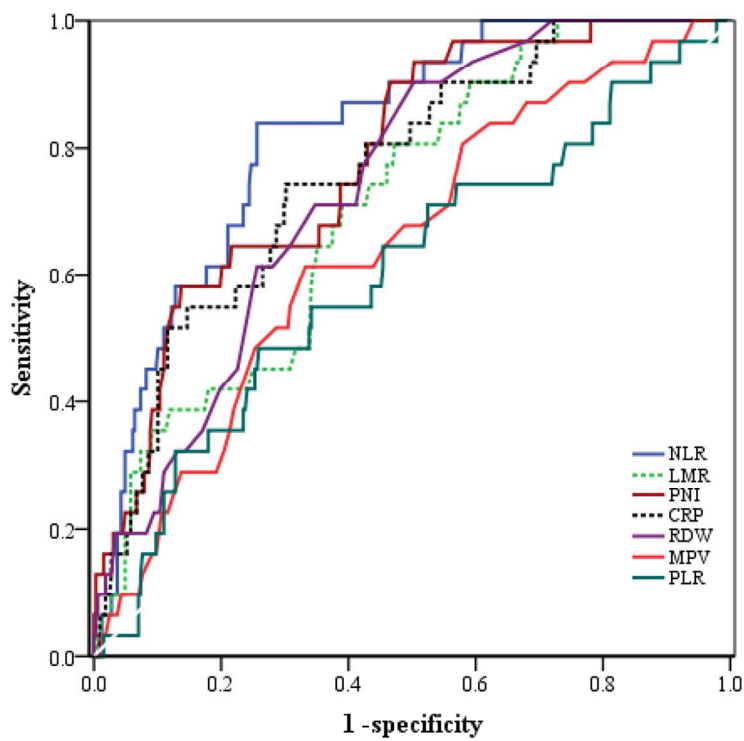
Fig. 1. Area under receiver operating characteristics curves for mortality prediction by inflammation-based prognostic markers

NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio; MPV, mean platelet volume; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio.

Fig. 2. Relationship between inflammation-based prognostic markers and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis

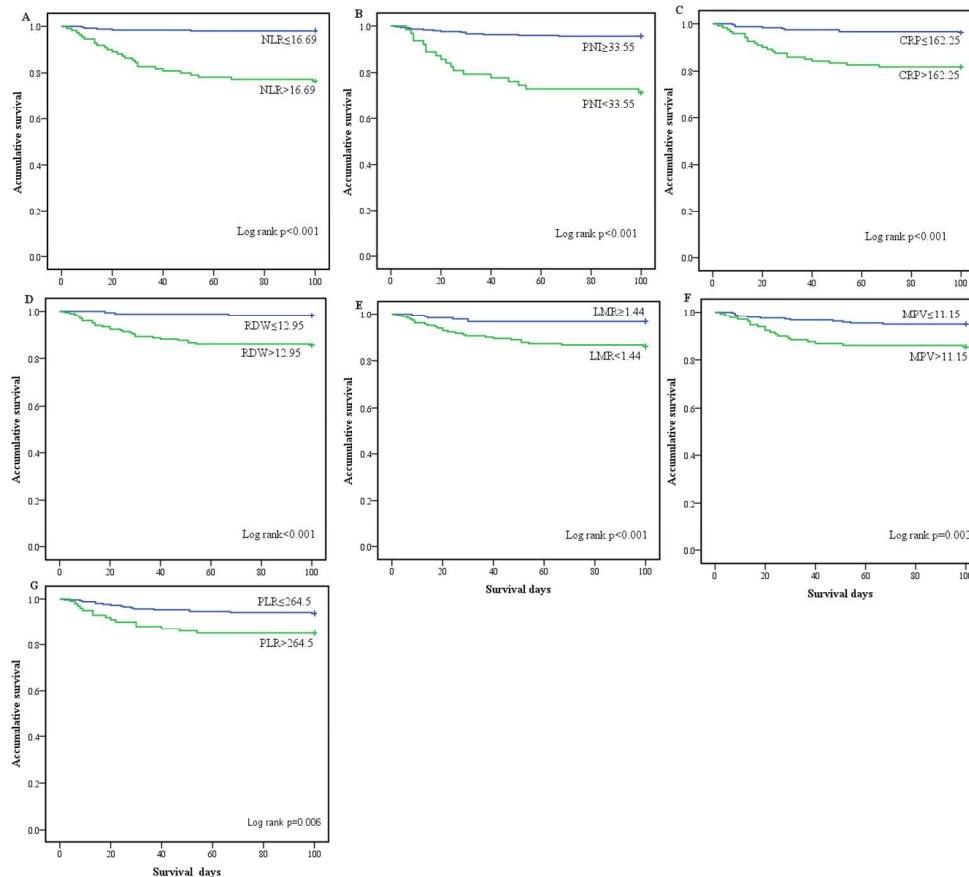
NLR, neutrophil lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte monocyte ratio; MPV, mean platelet volume; PLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio. **A, B, C, D, E, F, and G** show the relationship between NLR, PNI, CRP, RDW, LMR, MPV, and PLR and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively.

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TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

Section/Topic	Item	Checklist Item	Page
Title and abstract			
Title	1	Identify the study as developing and/or validating a multivariable prediction model, the target population, and the outcome to be predicted.	1
Abstract	2	Provide a summary of objectives, study design, setting, participants, sample size, predictors, outcome, statistical analysis, results, and conclusions.	2
Introduction			
Background and objectives	3a	Explain the medical context (including whether diagnostic or prognostic) and rationale for developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including references to existing models.	3,4
	3b	Specify the objectives, including whether the study describes the development or validation of the model or both.	4
Methods			
Source of data	4a	Describe the study design or source of data (e.g., randomized trial, cohort, or registry data), separately for the development and validation data sets, if applicable.	5
	4b	Specify the key study dates, including start of accrual; end of accrual; and, if applicable, end of follow-up.	5
Participants	5a	Specify key elements of the study setting (e.g., primary care, secondary care, general population) including number and location of centres.	5
	5b	Describe eligibility criteria for participants.	5
	5c	Give details of treatments received, if relevant.	Not relevant
Outcome	6a	Clearly define the outcome that is predicted by the prediction model, including how and when assessed.	5
	6b	Report any actions to blind assessment of the outcome to be predicted.	5
Predictors	7a	Clearly define all predictors used in developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including how and when they were measured.	6
	7b	Report any actions to blind assessment of predictors for the outcome and other predictors.	6
Sample size	8	Explain how the study size was arrived at.	5
Missing data	9	Describe how missing data were handled (e.g., complete-case analysis, single imputation, multiple imputation) with details of any imputation method.	7,8
Statistical analysis methods	10a	Describe how predictors were handled in the analyses.	6,7
	10b	Specify type of model, all model-building procedures (including any predictor selection), and method for internal validation.	6,7
	10d	Specify all measures used to assess model performance and, if relevant, to compare multiple models.	6,7
Risk groups	11	Provide details on how risk groups were created, if done.	6,7
Results			
Participants	13a	Describe the flow of participants through the study, including the number of participants with and without the outcome and, if applicable, a summary of the follow-up time. A diagram may be helpful.	7,8
	13b	Describe the characteristics of the participants (basic demographics, clinical features, available predictors), including the number of participants with missing data for predictors and outcome.	7,8,19,20
Model development	14a	Specify the number of participants and outcome events in each analysis.	7,8,19,20
	14b	If done, report the unadjusted association between each candidate predictor and outcome.	9
Model specification	15a	Present the full prediction model to allow predictions for individuals (i.e., all regression coefficients, and model intercept or baseline survival at a given time point).	9
	15b	Explain how to use the prediction model.	9
Model performance	16	Report performance measures (with CIs) for the prediction model.	8,9
Discussion			
Limitations	18	Discuss any limitations of the study (such as nonrepresentative sample, few events per predictor, missing data).	13
Interpretation	19b	Give an overall interpretation of the results, considering objectives, limitations, and results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence.	10-13
Implications	20	Discuss the potential clinical use of the model and implications for future research.	13
Other information			
Supplementary information	21	Provide information about the availability of supplementary resources, such as study protocol, Web calculator, and data sets.	Not relevant
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study.	14

BMJ Open

Comparison of the prognostic values of inflammation markers in patients with acute pancreatitis: a retrospective cohort study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2016-013206.R1
Article Type:	Research
Date Submitted by the Author:	09-Nov-2016
Complete List of Authors:	Li, Yuanyuan; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Zhao, Ying; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Feng, Limin; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Guo, Renyong; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine
Primary Subject Heading:	Gastroenterology and hepatology
Secondary Subject Heading:	Diagnostics
Keywords:	acute pancreatitis, mortality, red cell distribution width, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio

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4 **acute pancreatitis: a retrospective cohort study**
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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Inflammation-based prognostic markers (neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio [NLR], prognostic nutritional index [PNI], red cell distribution width [RDW], and lymphocyte-monocyte ratio [LMR]) are associated with overall survival in some diseases. This study assessed their prognostic value in mortality and severity in acute pancreatitis (AP).

Design: A retrospective cohort study.

Setting: Patients with AP were recruited from the emergency department at our hospital.

Participants: A total of 359 AP patients (31 non-survivors) were enrolled.

Primary and secondary outcome measures: Mortality and severity of AP were the primary and secondary outcome measures, respectively. Biochemistry and haematology results of the first test after admission were collected. Independent relationships between severe AP (SAP) and markers were assessed using multivariate logistic regression models. Mortality prediction ability was evaluated using receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves. Overall survival was evaluated using the Kaplan–Meier method, with differences compared using the log-rank test. Independent relationships between mortality and each predictor were estimated using Cox proportional hazard models.

Results: Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors had higher RDW ($p<0.001$), higher NLR ($p<0.001$), lower LMR ($p<0.001$), and lower PNI ($p<0.001$) at baseline. C-reactive protein (CRP) [odds ratio (OR)=8.251, $p<0.001$], RDW (OR=2.533, $p=0.003$), and PNI (OR=7.753, $p<0.001$) were independently associated with the occurrence of SAP. For predicting mortality, NLR had the largest area under the ROC curve (0.804, $p<0.001$), with a 16.64 cut-off value, 82.4% sensitivity, and 75.0%

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3 specificity. RDW was a reliable marker for excluding death owing to its lowest
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5 negative likelihood ratio (0.11). NLR [hazard ratio (HR) =4.726, p=0.004], CRP
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7 (HR=3.503, p=0.003), RDW (HR=3.139, p=0.013), and PNI (HR=2.641, p=0.011)
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9 were independently associated with mortality of AP.
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11 **Conclusions:** NLR was the most powerful marker of overall survival in this patient
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13 series.
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15 16 17 18 **Strengths and limitations of this study** 19

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21 • Compared with survivors of acute pancreatitis (AP), non-survivors had higher
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23 red cell distribution width (RDW) and neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR),
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25 and lower lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR) and prognostic nutritional index
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27 (PNI) at baseline.
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32 for the prediction of mortality compared with other markers.
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35 • RDW was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death.
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INTRODUCTION

Acute pancreatitis (AP) is rapid-onset inflammation of the pancreas that varies in severity from a self-limiting mild illness to rapidly progressive multiple organ failure. Statistics suggest that 10–20% of patients with AP develop severe acute pancreatitis (SAP),¹ which usually has an unfavourable disease progression and is associated with a poor prognosis.^{2,3} Prediction of disease severity can guide the management of patients with AP and improve the outcome. Organ failure and infected pancreatic necrosis are common causes of mortality in such patients,⁴ and a new international multidisciplinary classification of SAP incorporates both events as determinants of severity.⁵ The predictive values of various markers, such as Acute Physiology and Chronic Health Evaluation II (APACHE II) and Bedside Index of Severity in Acute Pancreatitis scores, C-reactive protein (CRP), and procalcitonin, have been previously assessed.⁶⁻⁸ A systematic review concluded it was justifiable to use blood urea nitrogen after 48 h of hospital admission for predicting persistent organ failure.⁹ In clinical studies, most studies have focused on disease severity, and only a few have directly investigated the relationship between predictors and mortality of AP. Furthermore, no reliable predictor of persistent organ failure within 48 h of admission has been identified.⁹

There is increasing evidence that the presence of a systemic inflammatory response is associated with poor survival in patients with various aetiologies, including malignancy.¹⁰⁻¹⁷ Many direct or combined markers of systemic inflammation are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available laboratory tests. Red cell distribution width (RDW),¹¹ neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR), prognostic nutritional index (PNI),¹² and lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR)¹⁷ have been used to predict the prognosis of disease. RDW was found to be an independent marker of

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3 short- and long-term prognosis in intensive care units.¹¹ NLR at admission served as
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5 an independent predictor of 3-month mortality rates in acute-on-chronic liver failure
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7 patients.¹³ Increased pre-treatment LMR was associated with a significantly more
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9 favourable prognosis in patients with solid tumours.¹⁷ Despite this evidence, very few
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11 studies have focused on the direct relationship between inflammation-based
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13 prognostic markers and mortality of AP. A cross-sectional study found a significant
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15 association between RDW and mortality in patients with AP.¹⁸ Another study
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17 investigated the prognostic value of NLR in AP and determined an optimal ratio for
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23 To the best of our knowledge, the current study is the first to simultaneously
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25 compare the prognostic value of these inflammation-based prognostic markers (NLR,
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27 PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR) of mortality in patients with AP.
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32 MATERIALS AND METHODS

33 34 Participants

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36 This retrospective cohort analysis consecutively enrolled a series of patients with AP
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38 who were admitted to the emergency department at our hospital between 1 July 2013
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40 and 18 August 2015. A diagnosis of AP required two of three features: (1) prolonged
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42 abdominal pain characteristic of AP, (2) threefold elevation of serum amylase and/or
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44 lipase levels above the normal range, and (3) characteristic findings of AP on
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46 abdominal ultrasonography and/or computed tomography scan.¹ Mild acute
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48 pancreatitis (MAP) was defined as absence of organ failure and an absence of local or
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50 systemic complications.¹ Moderately severe acute pancreatitis (MSAP) was defined as
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52 no evidence of persistent organ failure, but the presence of local or systemic
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54 complications and/or organ failure that resolved within 48 h. SAP was defined as
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3 persistent organ failure (>48 h).¹ Patients with recurrent pancreatitis were enrolled
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5 only at first admission. Patients with traumatic pancreatitis, autoimmune pancreatitis,
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7 diabetes mellitus, tumour, or liver failure were excluded.
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10 The prognostic information we focused on included overall survival and the
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12 severity of the disease. All enrolled patients were followed up for 100 days or until
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14 death. All clinical data were retrieved from medical records. For AP patients, 100
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16 days of prognostic information (survival or non-survival) was obtained by checking
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18 medical records or by contacting the patients' family members.
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20 21 22 23 **Ethics statement**

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25 Each participant provided written informed consent after being provided with an
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27 explanation of the study by phone, letter, or e-mail. The Ethics Committee of The
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29 First Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University College of Medicine approved the
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31 consent procedure and experiment periods. The study was conducted in accordance
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33 with the ethical principles contained within the Declaration of Helsinki.
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36 37 38 39 **Demographic information and laboratory analysis**

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41 Demographic information, including age, sex, aetiology, and complication, was
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43 collected from medical records. Pre-treatment laboratory data, including complete
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45 blood counts, serum CRP, albumin, and amylase were obtained during the emergency
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47 visit. An XE-2100 haematology autoanalyzer (Sysmex Corp., Kobe, Japan), a Hitachi
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49 7600 chemistry analyser (Hitachi High-Technologies, Tokyo, Japan), and Roche
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51 reagents (Roche Diagnostics, Indianapolis, IN, USA) were used in the laboratory.
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54 We assessed the prognostic value of general inflammation-based prognostic
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56 markers (NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR) for predicting the mortality of AP.
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3 Additionally, their ability to predict the severity of AP (SAP or not SAP) was
4 assessed. NLR and LMR were ratios of two types of blood cell. PNI = albumin
5 (g/L) + 5 × total lymphocyte count (10⁹/L).
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10 11 **Statistical analysis**

12 Variables were expressed as mean±SD, median (range) or categorical data as
13 percentages, if appropriate. The differences between the two groups were assessed
14 with an independent sample *t* test, the Mann-Whitney U test or χ^2 test as appropriate.
15
16 Multiple comparisons were performed by one-way analysis of variance or
17 Kruskal-Wallis H tests, as appropriate. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were
18 used to assess whether these inflammation markers were independent factors for
19 predicting SAP in patients with AP by unadjusted and adjusted models successively.
20
21 The AP patients were randomly divided into estimation and validation cohorts by
22 random number generators. The accuracy of each marker to predict mortality was
23 assessed using the receiver operating characteristic curve (ROC). The combination
24 models were developed by binary logistic regression analyses. Overall survival curves
25 were calculated using the Kaplan–Meier method, and differences in survival rates
26 were compared using the log-rank test. Univariate and multivariate Cox proportional
27 hazard models were used to estimate the significance and independence of the
28 relationship of each marker and mortality. The variables with p-value <0.1 in
29 univariate analysis were included in a multivariate Cox proportional hazard regression
30 model. A p-value <0.05 was considered statistically significant. Statistical analyses
31 were performed with SPSS version 19.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).
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54 55 56 **RESULTS**

Patient characteristics

A total of 359 AP patients (197 MAP, 76 MSAP, and 86 SAP) were enrolled in the study. The predefined probability of type I error was 0.05 ($\alpha=0.05$), and the sample size was large enough to guarantee 0.90 of test power ($\beta=0.1$). Forty-five patients were excluded from the analysis, including those with traumatic pancreatitis (n=1), autoimmune pancreatitis (n=5), diabetes mellitus (n=7), tumour (n=7), liver failure (n=2), or incomplete medical records or who were lost to follow-up (n=23). Tables 1 and 2 show the baseline characteristics of the patients. There were no significant differences in age (p=0.352), aetiology (p=0.875), or sex (p=0.919) among the three groups (MAP, MSAP, and SAP). As the illness worsened, CRP, RDW, and NLR gradually increased, but PNI decreased (all p<0.05; Table 1). LMR decreased significantly (p<0.001) in MSAP compared with MAP patients, but there was no significant difference between MSAP and SAP patients (p=0.883).

Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors were older (p=0.001) and had higher CRP (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.010), RDW (p<0.001), and NLR (p<0.001). Conversely, lymphocyte count (p<0.001), platelet (p=0.001), albumin (p<0.001), LMR (p<0.001), and PNI (p<0.001) were lower in non-survivors than in survivors (Table 2).

The relationship between markers and severity of AP

The multivariate logistic regression models revealed that high CRP [>110 vs. ≤ 110 mg/L, adjusted odd ratio (OR)=8.251, 95%CI: 3.897-17.468, p<0.001], RDW (>13.0 vs. ≤ 13.0 %, adjusted OR= 2.533, 95%CI: 1.365-4.702, p=0.003) and low PNI(<41.1 vs. ≥ 41.1 , adjusted OR=7.753, 95%CI: 3.400-17.680, p<0.001) were independent factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP (Table 3).

The markers' power for predicting 100 days mortality

The enrolled 359 patients with AP were randomly grouped into two cohorts: the estimation cohort (n=181) and the validation cohort (n=178). No significant difference was observed between the estimation and the validation cohorts in all characteristics (Supplementary Table S1). ROC curves of the estimation cohort were constructed to evaluate the ability of each marker to predict 100 days mortality in AP. Table 4 shows the area under the receiver operating characteristic curves (AUCs) and optimal cut-off values. The ability of NLR to predict mortality (AUC=0.804, $p<0.001$) was good; those of PNI (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), CRP (AUC=0.774, $p<0.001$), RDW (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), and LMR (AUC=0.744, $p<0.001$) were fair. The NLR had the largest AUC, and RDW and PNI had the highest sensitivity and specificity, respectively. Therefore, these three markers were selected for combination. The AUCs of NLR+PNI, NLR+RDW, and PNI+RDW were 0.825(95%CI: 0.761–0.877); 0.854(95%CI: 0.794–0.902), and 0.806(95%CI: 0.741–0.861), respectively (Fig. 1). There were no significant differences in AUCs of combined index and NLR ($p=0.699$; $p=0.167$; $p=0.975$, respectively).

For NLR, the optimal cut-off value for mortality prediction was 16.64, with a sensitivity of 82.4% and specificity of 75.6%. RDW has the highest sensitivity (94.1%) and lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11), so it was a reliable predictive index for excluding mortality in AP patients. PNI has the highest specificity (88.4%) and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable for a confirmed index among the indexes assessed in this article.

In the validation cohort, the AUCs of NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR were 0.851(95%CI: 0.790–0.900), 0.753(95%CI: 0.683–0.815), 0.708(95%CI:

0.635–0.773), 0.791(95%CI: 0.724–0.848), and 0.677(95%CI: 0.603–0.745), respectively. There were no significant differences in the AUCs of NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR between the estimation and validation cohorts ($p=0.477$, $p=0.809$, $p=0.437$, $p=0.782$, and $p=0.455$, respectively).

Survival analysis

AP patients were stratified into groups by cut-off values. Kaplan–Meier survival curves demonstrate the relationships between inflammation-based prognostic markers and overall survival of patients with AP (Fig. 2A–E). Elevated NLR ($p<0.001$), CRP ($p<0.001$), and RDW ($p<0.001$) were associated with increased probability of death. Conversely, decreased PNI ($p<0.001$) and LMR ($p=0.001$) were associated with decreased overall survival.

According to the cut-off values of the factors, low NLR(≤ 16.64), low CRP($\leq 162.2\text{mg/L}$), low RDW($\leq 13.0\%$), high PNI(≥ 33.1), and high LMR(≥ 1.40) were selected as references. Univariate analysis and Cox regression revealed that age ($p<0.001$), amylase ($p=0.001$), NLR ($p<0.001$), PNI ($p<0.001$), CRP ($p<0.001$), RDW ($p<0.001$), and LMR ($p=0.002$) were associated with AP mortality (Table 5). These factors were evaluated by multivariate Cox regression. Age (HR=4.039, 95% CI: 1.873-8.713, $p<0.001$), NLR (HR=4.726, 95% CI: 1.627-13.726, $p=0.004$), CRP(HR=3.503, 95% CI: 1.534-7.999, $p=0.003$), RDW(HR=3.139, 95% CI: 1.277-7.714, $p=0.013$), and PNI(HR=2.641, 95% CI: 1.248-5.590, $p=0.011$) were independently associated with mortality of AP (Table 5).

DISCUSSION

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3 AP is an inflammatory disease, with mortality arising mainly from organ failure or
4 infected pancreatic necrosis.⁴ Our study estimated the prognostic value of various
5 inflammation-based prognostic markers for predicting mortality of AP. According the
6 classification of AUCs,^{20 21} the ability of the NLR to predict mortality was good,
7 while those of PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR were fair. Cox regression analysis revealed
8 that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with mortality of
9 AP. Additionally, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with the
10 occurrence of SAP in AP patients.
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20 NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI are inexpensive, convenient, and readily available in
21 clinical settings. From examination of the AUCs, NLR had the best performance.
22 With a NLR>16.64 at the time of admission, the risk of dying increased 3.726-fold
23 compared with NLR≤16.64. RDW was the most reliable marker for excluding death
24 in AP patients, owing to its lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11). PNI has the
25 highest specificity (88.4%) and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable
26 to be a confirmed index among the indexes assessed in this article. However,
27 fluctuations in the NLR and CRP can be influenced sensitively by the use of
28 antibiotics; therefore, NLR and CRP are not suitable for patients undergoing intensive
29 use of antibiotics. Similarly, blood transfusion and parenteral nutrition may affect
30 RDW and PNI, respectively, so the predictive value of RDW and PNI in these
31 patients was discounted.
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47 In AP, inflammation propagates and promotes tissue destruction via activation of
48 a cascade of inflammatory cytokines, proteolytic enzymes, and oxygen free radicals.¹⁹
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²² Neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes are the three main types of white blood cells (WBCs). Neutrophils play a key role in the development of local tissue destruction and systemic complications of SAP.²³ Depletion of neutrophils has been

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3 associated with an improved prognosis of AP.²³ The percentage of immature
4 neutrophilic granulocytes might be used clinically as a simple early predictor of an
5 adverse outcome in SAP.²⁴ Additionally, recent studies revealed that the extent of
6 lymphopenia was also associated with disease severity.²⁵⁻²⁷ Lymphopenia has been
7 reported to have independent prognostic value for some diseases,^{19 26-29} including AP.
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Takeyama *et al.* found that impairment of cellular immunity caused by peripheral lymphocyte apoptosis was linked to the subsequent development of infectious complications in AP.²⁸ Monocytes produce various cytokines and inflammatory mediators that further amplify inflammatory cell recruitment into the pancreas as well as distant organs such as the lungs.³⁰ Similar to neutrophils, a protective effect was also found by depleting macrophages in a mouse model of AP.³¹ Theoretically, NLR and LMR, which combine two opposing parameters, should be more accurate than either parameter alone. In fact, we found that NLR had the greatest prognostic value of all the factors we evaluated. Despite this, it is important to apply it with caution in clinical settings. Broad-spectrum antibiotics with good tissue penetration, which are essential medicines in the treatment of SAP, can affect WBC by reducing inflammation. Thus, the prognostic value of NLR in AP is uncertain if the effect of antibiotic treatment is not taken into account.³² For this reason, the neutrophil and lymphocyte counts used in this study were from the first complete blood cell count, conducted during the emergency visit. We confirmed that the enrolled patients were untreated at that time; consequently, our results are most likely applicable to untreated patients. Unlike for NLR, the predictive ability of LMR was only fair, and was not independently associated with overall survival in AP.

Serum albumin is a negative acute phase response reactant, and it reflects the body's nutritional status. Albumin <25 g/L was an independent prognostic factor

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3 related to a poor prognosis of AP.³³ Variation of albumin within 24 h has been
4 identified as a risk factor for a poor prognosis of critically ill patients in the early
5 stages of SAP.³⁴ The PNI, which includes serum albumin and lymphocyte count, is an
6 independent predictor of poor overall survival in patients with hepatocellular
7 carcinoma.³⁵ To the best of our knowledge, few studies have reported the application
8 of PNI for predicting mortality of AP, but we found that it was an independent
9 prognostic factor, and was suitable as a confirmed marker.
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19 Numerous studies have reported RDW as a strong, independent prognostic factor
20 in various diseases and conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, rheumatoid
21 arthritis, cancer, and critical illnesses.^{18 36-38} Our results are consistent with the study
22 by Yao J *et al.*,¹⁸ who reported a significant association between RDW and mortality
23 of patients with AP. Additionally, we found that RDW was most suitable as a reliable
24 excluding marker among the markers we assessed. The mechanisms underlying the
25 association between RDW and mortality in AP remain unclear. The obvious
26 metabolic abnormalities in non-survivors of AP, including inflammation, oxidative
27 stress, poor nutritional status, and persistent organ failure, lead to deregulation of red
28 blood cell homeostasis involving both impaired erythropoiesis and abnormal red
29 blood cell survival.³⁸ RDW reflects these impairments in homeostasis, but only further
30 research can confirm this speculation.
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45 The prognostic markers evaluated in this study are direct or combined markers of
46 systemic inflammation that are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available
47 laboratory tests. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to compare the
48 prognostic value of these markers for predicting mortality in patients with AP
49 simultaneously. Additionally, suitable excluding and identifying markers were found.
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3 Some potential limitations of the current study should be noted. This was a
4 retrospective, single-centre study; a larger, prospective study is needed to validate
5 these results. Second, only the first set of admission blood results were investigated.
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7 As factors change with time, they should be surveyed in the future because of the
8 rapid-onset of inflammation. Third, the typical prediction models, such as APACHE
9 II score, should be included in future research. Additionally, we only described the
10 association of each of the predictors with mortality of AP; the underlying mechanisms
11 need to be investigated.
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21 In conclusion, we found that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently
22 associated with overall survival of AP. NLR had the best overall performance, RDW
23 was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death, and PNI was a good predictive
24 marker for death. When applying these markers, any possible influence from therapy
25 should be considered.
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34 **Abbreviations**

35 AP, acute pancreatitis; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve;
36 CI, confidence interval; CRP, C-reactive protein; HR, hazard ratio; LMR,
37 lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio; +LR, positive likelihood
38 ratio; MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis;
39 NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; OR, odd ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index;
40 RDW, red cell distribution width; ROC, receiver operating characteristic curve; SAP,
41 severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count.
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54 **Acknowledgments**

55 We thank Edanz Group Ltd. for helping edit the English of the final manuscript.
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Contributors

R.G. and Y.L. designed the experiments. R.G. and Y.L. contributed to the data collection. Y.Z. conducted the data analysis. Y.L., R.G, and L.F. wrote the manuscript. All authors reviewed the manuscript.

Funding

This work was financially supported by grants from the Zhejiang Provincial Natural Science Foundation of China (LY15H190002) and the Department of Education Foundation of Zhejiang Province, China (Y201330146).

Competing interests

None declared.

Patient consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the First Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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Table 1 Demographics and laboratory findings in patients with acute pancreatitis

Variables	1. MAP(n=197)	2. MSAP(n=76)	3. SAP(n=86)	p value		
				all groups	1 vs. 2	2 vs. 3
Age (years)	51.43 ± 16.00	48.47 ± 13.28	50.69 ± 14.61	0.352	0.122	0.317
Male (%)	108(54.8%)	41(53.9%)	49(57.0%)	0.919	0.896	0.699
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	52%/12%/11%/25%	51%/16%/13%/20%	47%/15%/14%/24%	0.875	0.664	0.892
WBC (×10 ⁹ /L)	11.5 (3.1–32.0)	14.1 (4.5–36.8)	16.05 (5.9–38.4)	<0.001	<0.001	0.278
Lymphocyte (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.1 (0.2–9.4)	1.0 (0.2–2.6)	0.80 (0.2–2.9)	<0.001	0.004	0.089
Platelet (×10 ⁹ /L)	202 (21–502)	193 (58–548)	163 (27–540)	0.004	0.376	0.046
Albumin (g/L)	38.29 ± 5.07	34.38 ± 6.39	29.99 ± 5.35	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	53.9 (0.7–386)	133.6 (3.2–436.5)	196.1 (27.1–426.7)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13–5191)	222 (27–3845)	581 (16–2377)	0.141	0.083	0.056
RDW (%)	12.8 (11.4–19.2)	13.0 (11.3–16.3)	13.7 (11.7–23.6)	<0.001	0.013	0.014
NLR	8.46 (1.33–55)	14.60 (1.73–60)	19.65 (3.57–53.67)	<0.001	<0.001	0.020
LMR	1.88 (0.28–13.33)	1.03 (0.29–5.33)	1.14 (0.22–6.32)	<0.001	<0.001	0.883
PNI	44.53 ± 6.63	39.36 ± 6.71	34.55 ± 6.02	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Mortality (%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	31(36.0%)	<0.001	–	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean±SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

1 vs. 2, MAP group vs. MSAP group; 2 vs. 3, MSAP group vs. SAP group.

MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Table 2 Demographics and laboratory findings in survivors and non-survivors of acute pancreatitis

Variables	Survivors(n=328)	Non-survivors(n=31)	p value
Age (years)	49.84 ± 14.88	58.90 ± 15.60	0.001
Male (%)	179(54.6%)	19(61.3%)	0.472
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	50%/13%/12%/25%	58%/19%/10%/13%	0.346
WBC ($\times 10^9/L$)	12.85 (3.1–38.4)	18.5 (6.5–29.3)	0.001
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^9/L$)	1.08 (0.17–9.40)	0.60 (0.30–1.60)	<0.001
Platelet ($\times 10^9/L$)	197 (21–548)	159 (27–376)	0.001
Albumin (g/L)	35.95 ± 6.30	30.44 ± 5.54	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	98.6 (0.7–436.5)	239.2 (27.1–398.2)	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	343.5 (13–5191)	909 (16–2377)	0.010
RDW (%)	13 (11.3–19.2)	13.8 (12.6–23.6)	<0.001
NLR	10.47 (1.33–60.0)	25.0 (8.67–53.67)	<0.001
PNI	41.71 ± 7.50	34.00 ± 6.35	<0.001
LMR	1.51 (0.22–13.33)	1.13 (0.24–2.26)	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean±SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

Table 3 Odds ratios of prognostic factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP

Factors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value
NLR (>11.36 vs. ≤11.36)	3.707(2.173-6.326)	<0.001	3.578 (2.082-6.149)	<0.001	1.463(0.711-3.010)	0.301
CRP (>110 vs. ≤110mg/L)	9.867(5.116-19.030)	<0.001	12.609 (6.304-25.218)	<0.001	8.251(3.897-17.468)	<0.001
RDW (>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	3.368(2.003-5.663)	<0.001	3.529 (2.076-5.998)	<0.001	2.533(1.365-4.702)	0.003
PNI (<41.1 vs. ≥41.1)	9.951(5.055-19.589)	<0.001	11.356 (5.665-22.766)	<0.001	7.753(3.400-17.680)	<0.001
LMR (<1.43 vs. ≥1.43)	2.564(1.539-4.271)	<0.001	2.552 (1.524-4.274)	<0.001	0.722(0.355-1.471)	0.370

Model1: unadjusted model.

Model2: adjusted for age, gender and amylase.

Model3: NLR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR; CRP was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, RDW, PNI, and LMR; RDW was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, NLR, PNI, and LMR; PNI was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and LMR; LMR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI.

AP, acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Table 4 Discriminatory ability of inflammation-based markers for predicting mortality in AP patients

Index	AUC(95% CI)	p value	Cut-off	Sensitivity	Specificity	+LR	-LR
NLR	0.804(0.738-0.859)	<0.001	16.64	82.4%	75.6%	3.38	0.23
CRP	0.774(0.706-0.833)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	76.5%	73.8%	2.92	0.32
RDW	0.769(0.700-0.828)	<0.001	13.0%	94.1%	54.3%	2.06	0.11
PNI	0.769(0.701- 0.828)	<0.001	33.1	58.8%	88.4%	5.08	0.47
LMR	0.744(0.674-0.806)	<0.001	1.40	82.4%	57.3%	1.93	0.31

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; CI, confidence interval; +LR, positive likelihood ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio.

The p value is comparing the AUC with 0.5.

Table 5 Prognostic factors of overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis by univariate and multivariate analyses

Factors	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis	
	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value
Age (>63 vs. ≤63 years)	5.384(2.653-10.925)	<0.001	4.039(1.873-8.713)	<0.001
Gender (female vs. male)	0.767(0.372-1.579)	0.471		
Amylase (>618 vs. ≤618U/L)	3.544(1.699-7.526)	0.001	2.173(0.965-4.891)	0.061
NLR(>16.64 vs. ≤16.64)	13.130(5.041-34.205)	<0.001	4.726(1.627-13.726)	0.004
CRP(>162.2 vs. ≤162.2mg/L)	6.127(2.740-13.701)	<0.001	3.503(1.534-7.999)	0.003
RDW(>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	4.929(2.022-12.017)	<0.001	3.139(1.277-7.714)	0.013
PNI(<33.1 vs. ≥33.1)	6.912(3.414-13.991)	<0.001	2.641(1.248-5.590)	0.011
LMR(<1.40 vs. ≥1.40)	3.797(1.636-8.813)	0.002	1.036(0.403-2.659)	0.942

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution

width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Figure Legends

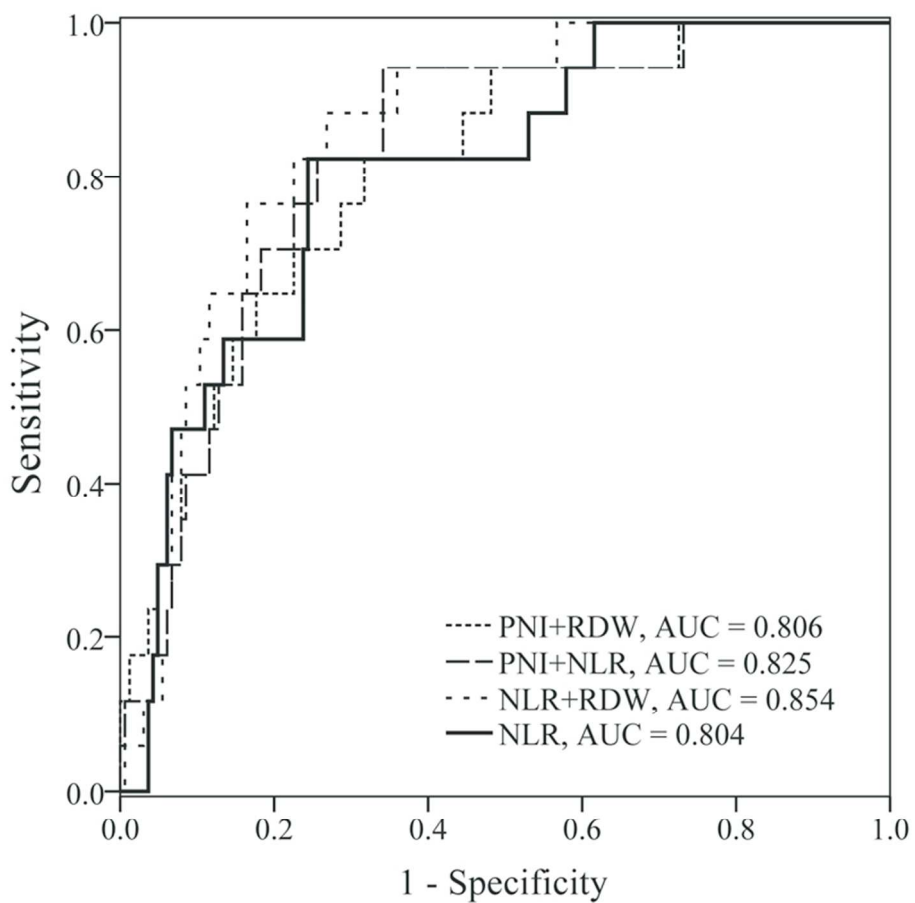
Fig. 1. ROC curves analysis for predicting mortality by NLR and combined markers in the estimation cohort.

ROC, receiver operating characteristic; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Fig. 2. Relationship between inflammation-based prognostic markers and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis

A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively.

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

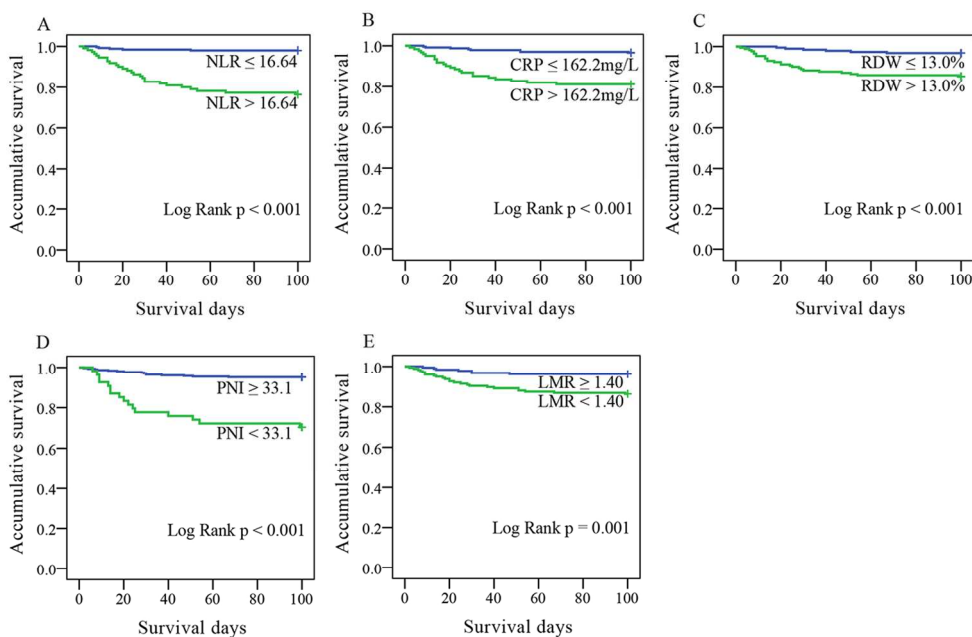


ROC, receiver operating characteristic; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

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A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively. NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

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Supplementary Table S1 Demographics and laboratory findings in estimation and validation cohorts

Variable	All patients (n=359)	Training set(n=181)	Validation set(n =178)	p value
Age (years)	50.63 ±15.13	51.66 ± 15.69	49.58 ± 14.51	0.194
Male [N (%)]	198(55.2%)	96(53.0%)	102(57.3%)	0.417
Aetiology (1/2/3/4) %	54.3/9.7/12.0/24.0	55.2/12.7/12.2/19.9	53.4/6.7/11.8/28.1	0.118
WBC ($\times 10^9/L$)	12.9(3.1-38.4)	13.3 (3.1-38.4)	12.9 (4.2-36.8)	0.942
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^9/L$)	1.00 (0.17-9.40)	1.00 (0.20-9.40)	1.00 (0.17-4.80)	0.965
Platelet ($\times 10^9/L$)	192 (21-548)	193 (27-502)	191.5 (21-548)	0.354
Albumin (g/L)	35.47 ±6.42	35.72 ± 6.61	35.22 ± 6.24	0.456
CRP (mg/L)	110 (0.7-436.5)	102.3 (0.8-436.5)	116.85 (0.7-419.4)	0.081
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13-5191)	501 (13-5191)	330 (16-4927)	0.238
RDW (%)	13.0(11.3-23.6)	13.1 (11.3-19.2)	13.0 (11.4-23.6)	0.421
NLR	11.36 (1.33-60.0)	11.50 (1.33-55.0)	11.18 (1.39-60.0)	0.786
PNI	41.05 ±7.72	41.22 ± 7.74	40.87 ± 7.71	0.670
LMR	1.43(0.22-13.33)	1.48 (0.24-13.33)	1.36 (0.22-10.00)	0.367
Mortality [N (%)]	31(8.6%)	17(9.4%)	14(7.9%)	0.607

Continuous variables are presented as mean ±SD or median (range).

p value was training set versus validation set.

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

Section/Topic	Item	Checklist Item	Page
Title and abstract			
Title	1	Identify the study as developing and/or validating a multivariable prediction model, the target population, and the outcome to be predicted.	1
Abstract	2	Provide a summary of objectives, study design, setting, participants, sample size, predictors, outcome, statistical analysis, results, and conclusions.	2,3
Introduction			
Background and objectives	3a	Explain the medical context (including whether diagnostic or prognostic) and rationale for developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including references to existing models.	4,5
	3b	Specify the objectives, including whether the study describes the development or validation of the model or both.	5
Methods			
Source of data	4a	Describe the study design or source of data (e.g., randomized trial, cohort, or registry data), separately for the development and validation data sets, if applicable.	5
	4b	Specify the key study dates, including start of accrual; end of accrual; and, if applicable, end of follow-up.	5
Participants	5a	Specify key elements of the study setting (e.g., primary care, secondary care, general population) including number and location of centres.	5,6
	5b	Describe eligibility criteria for participants.	5,6
	5c	Give details of treatments received, if relevant.	Not relevant
Outcome	6a	Clearly define the outcome that is predicted by the prediction model, including how and when assessed.	6
	6b	Report any actions to blind assessment of the outcome to be predicted.	6
Predictors	7a	Clearly define all predictors used in developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including how and when they were measured.	6,7
	7b	Report any actions to blind assessment of predictors for the outcome and other predictors.	6,7
Sample size	8	Explain how the study size was arrived at.	8
Missing data	9	Describe how missing data were handled (e.g., complete-case analysis, single imputation, multiple imputation) with details of any imputation method.	8
Statistical analysis methods	10a	Describe how predictors were handled in the analyses.	7
	10b	Specify type of model, all model-building procedures (including any predictor selection), and method for internal validation.	7
	10d	Specify all measures used to assess model performance and, if relevant, to compare multiple models.	7
Risk groups	11	Provide details on how risk groups were created, if done.	7
Results			
Participants	13a	Describe the flow of participants through the study, including the number of participants with and without the outcome and, if applicable, a summary of the follow-up time. A diagram may be helpful.	8
	13b	Describe the characteristics of the participants (basic demographics, clinical features, available predictors), including the number of participants with missing data for predictors and outcome.	8, Table1 and 2
Model development	14a	Specify the number of participants and outcome events in each analysis.	8, Table1 and 2
	14b	If done, report the unadjusted association between each candidate predictor and outcome.	8,10, Table 3 and 5
Model specification	15a	Present the full prediction model to allow predictions for individuals (i.e., all regression coefficients, and model intercept or baseline survival at a given time point).	8,10, Table 3 and 5
	15b	Explain how to use the prediction model.	8,10
Model performance	16	Report performance measures (with CIs) for the prediction model.	8,10, Table3 and 5
Discussion			
Limitations	18	Discuss any limitations of the study (such as nonrepresentative sample, few events per predictor, missing data).	13
Interpretation	19b	Give an overall interpretation of the results, considering objectives, limitations, and results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence.	11-14
Implications	20	Discuss the potential clinical use of the model and implications for future research.	11,14
Other information			
Supplementary	21	Provide information about the availability of supplementary resources, such as	Yes



TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

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information		study protocol, Web calculator, and data sets.	
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study.	15

We recommend using the TRIPOD Checklist in conjunction with the TRIPOD Explanation and Elaboration document.

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BMJ Open

Comparison of the prognostic values of inflammation markers in patients with acute pancreatitis: a retrospective cohort study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2016-013206.R2
Article Type:	Research
Date Submitted by the Author:	05-Jan-2017
Complete List of Authors:	Li, Yuanyuan; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Zhao, Ying; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Feng, Limin; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Guo, Renyong; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine
Primary Subject Heading:	Gastroenterology and hepatology
Secondary Subject Heading:	Diagnostics
Keywords:	acute pancreatitis, mortality, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio, prognostic nutritional index

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52 23 **Short title:** Inflammation markers and acute pancreatitis
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3 25 **Word count:** 2960 words (excluding title page, abstract, references, figures and
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5 26 tables)
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28 **ABSTRACT**

29 **Objectives:** Inflammation-based prognostic markers (neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio
30 [NLR], prognostic nutritional index [PNI], red cell distribution width [RDW], and
31 lymphocyte-monocyte ratio [LMR]) are associated with overall survival in some
32 diseases. This study assessed their prognostic value in mortality and severity in acute
33 pancreatitis (AP).

34 **Design:** A retrospective cohort study.

35 **Setting:** Patients with AP were recruited from the emergency department at our
36 hospital.

37 **Participants:** A total of 359 AP patients (31 non-survivors) were enrolled.

38 **Primary and secondary outcome measures:** Mortality and severity of AP were the
39 primary and secondary outcome measures, respectively. Biochemistry and
40 haematology results of the first test after admission were collected. Independent
41 relationships between severe AP (SAP) and markers were assessed using multivariate
42 logistic regression models. Mortality prediction ability was evaluated using receiver
43 operating characteristic (ROC) curves. Overall survival was evaluated using the
44 Kaplan–Meier method, with differences compared using the log-rank test.
45 Independent relationships between mortality and each predictor were estimated using
46 Cox proportional hazard models.

47 **Results:** Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors had higher RDW ($p<0.001$),
48 higher NLR ($p<0.001$), lower LMR ($p<0.001$), and lower PNI ($p<0.001$) at baseline.
49 C-reactive protein (CRP) [odds ratio (OR)=8.251, $p<0.001$], RDW (OR=2.533,
50 $p=0.003$), and PNI (OR=7.753, $p<0.001$) were independently associated with the
51 occurrence of SAP. For predicting mortality, NLR had the largest area under the ROC
52 curve (0.804, $p<0.001$), with a 16.64 cut-off value, 82.4% sensitivity, and 75.0%

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3 53 specificity. RDW was a reliable marker for excluding death owing to its lowest
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5 54 negative likelihood ratio (0.11). NLR (hazard ratio (HR) =4.726, p=0.004), CRP
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7 55 (HR=3.503, p=0.003), RDW (HR=3.139, p=0.013), and PNI (HR=2.641, p=0.011)
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10 56 were independently associated with mortality of AP.

11 **Conclusions:** NLR was the most powerful marker of overall survival in this patient
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13 series.
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15 16 17 18 19 60 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

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22 61 • Compared with survivors of acute pancreatitis (AP), non-survivors had higher
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24 62 red cell distribution width (RDW) and neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR),
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26 63 and lower lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR) and prognostic nutritional index
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28 64 (PNI) at baseline.
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31 65 • NLR exhibited a higher area under the receiver operating characteristic curve
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33 66 for the prediction of mortality compared with other markers.
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35 67 • RDW was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death.
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38 68 • NLR, PNI, C-reactive protein, and RDW were independently associated with
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40 69 overall survival of AP.
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43 70 • This was a retrospective cohort analysis.
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73 **INTRODUCTION**

74 Acute pancreatitis (AP) is rapid-onset inflammation of the pancreas that varies in
75 severity from a self-limiting mild illness to rapidly progressive multiple organ failure.
76 Statistics suggest that 10–20% of patients with AP develop severe acute pancreatitis
77 (SAP),¹ which usually has an unfavourable disease progression and is associated with
78 a poor prognosis.^{2 3} Prediction of disease severity can guide the management of
79 patients with AP and improve the outcome. Organ failure and infected pancreatic
80 necrosis are common causes of mortality in such patients,⁴ and a new international
81 multidisciplinary classification of SAP incorporates both events as determinants of
82 severity.⁵ The predictive values of various markers, such as Acute Physiology and
83 Chronic Health Evaluation II (APACHE II) and Bedside Index of Severity in Acute
84 Pancreatitis scores, C-reactive protein (CRP), and procalcitonin, have been previously
85 assessed.⁶⁻⁸ A systematic review concluded it was justifiable to use blood urea
86 nitrogen after 48 h of hospital admission for predicting persistent organ failure.⁹ In
87 clinical studies, most studies have focused on disease severity, and only a few have
88 directly investigated the relationship between predictors and mortality of AP.
89 Furthermore, no reliable predictor of persistent organ failure within 48 h of admission
90 has been identified.⁹

91 There is increasing evidence that the presence of a systemic inflammatory
92 response is associated with poor survival in patients with various aetiologies,
93 including malignancy.¹⁰⁻¹⁷ Many direct or combined markers of systemic
94 inflammation are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available laboratory tests.
95 Red cell distribution width (RDW),¹⁰ neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR), prognostic
96 nutritional index (PNI),¹¹ and lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR)¹² have been used to

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3 97 predict the prognosis of disease. RDW was found to be an independent marker of
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5 98 short- and long-term prognosis in intensive care units.¹⁰ NLR at admission served as
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7 99 an independent predictor of 3-month mortality rates in acute-on-chronic liver failure
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10 100 patients.¹³ Increased pre-treatment LMR was associated with a significantly more
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12 101 favourable prognosis in patients with solid tumours.¹² Despite this evidence, very few
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14 102 studies have focused on the direct relationship between inflammation-based
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16 103 prognostic markers and mortality of AP. A cross-sectional study found a significant
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18 104 association between RDW and mortality in patients with AP.¹⁸ Another study
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20 105 investigated the prognostic value of NLR in AP and determined an optimal ratio for
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22 106 prediction of severity.¹⁹

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25 107 To the best of our knowledge, the current study is the first to simultaneously
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27 108 compare the prognostic value of these inflammation-based prognostic markers (NLR,
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29 109 PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR) of mortality in patients with AP.
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33 34 111 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

35 36 112 **Participants**

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38 113 This retrospective cohort analysis consecutively enrolled a series of patients with AP
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40 114 who were admitted to the emergency department at our hospital between 1 July 2013
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42 115 and 18 August 2015. A diagnosis of AP required two of three features: (1) prolonged
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44 116 abdominal pain characteristic of AP, (2) threefold elevation of serum amylase and/or
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46 117 lipase levels above the normal range, and (3) characteristic findings of AP on
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48 118 abdominal ultrasonography and/or computed tomography scan.¹ Mild acute
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50 119 pancreatitis (MAP) was defined as an absence of organ failure and an absence of local
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52 120 or systemic complications.¹ Moderately severe acute pancreatitis (MSAP) was defined
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54 121 as no evidence of persistent organ failure, but the presence of local or systemic
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3 122 complications and/or organ failure that resolved within 48 h. SAP was defined as
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5 123 persistent organ failure (>48 h).¹ Patients with recurrent pancreatitis were enrolled
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7 124 only at first admission. Patients with traumatic pancreatitis, autoimmune pancreatitis,
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9 125 diabetes mellitus, tumour, or liver failure were excluded.

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11 The prognostic information we focused on included overall survival and the
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13 severity of the disease. All enrolled patients were followed for 100 days or until death.
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15 127 All clinical data were retrieved from medical records. For AP patients, 100 days of
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17 128 prognostic information (survival or non-survival) was obtained by checking medical
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19 129 records or by contacting the patients' family members.
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24 25 132 **Ethics statement**

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27 133 Each participant provided written informed consent after being provided with an
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29 134 explanation of the study by phone, letter, or e-mail. The Ethics Committee of The
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31 135 First Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University College of Medicine approved the
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33 136 consent procedure and experiment periods. The study was conducted in accordance
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35 137 with the ethical principles contained within the Declaration of Helsinki.
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40 41 139 **Demographic information and laboratory analysis**

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43 140 Demographic information, including age, sex, aetiology, and complication, was
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45 141 collected from medical records. Pre-treatment laboratory data, including complete
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47 142 blood counts, serum CRP, albumin, and amylase were obtained during the emergency
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49 143 visit. An XE-2100 haematology autoanalyzer (Sysmex Corp., Kobe, Japan), a Hitachi
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51 144 7600 chemistry analyser (Hitachi High-Technologies, Tokyo, Japan), and Roche
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53 145 reagents (Roche Diagnostics, Indianapolis, IN, USA) were used in the laboratory.
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146 We assessed the prognostic value of general inflammation-based prognostic
147 markers (NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR) for predicting the mortality of AP.
148 Additionally, their ability to predict the severity of AP (SAP or not SAP) was
149 assessed. NLR and LMR were ratios of two types of blood cell. PNI = albumin
150 (g/L) + 5 × total lymphocyte count (10⁹/L).

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152 **Statistical analysis**

153 Variables are expressed as mean ± SD or median (range) and categorical data as
154 percentages, as appropriate. Differences between the two groups were assessed using
155 an independent sample *t*-test, Mann–Whitney U test, or χ^2 test, as appropriate.
156 Multiple comparisons were performed by one-way analysis of variance or
157 Kruskal–Wallis H tests, as appropriate. The Bonferroni method was used to adjust for
158 multiple comparisons. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were used to assess
159 whether the inflammation markers were independent factors for predicting SAP in
160 patients with AP by unadjusted and adjusted models successively. AP patients were
161 randomly divided into estimation and validation cohorts by random number
162 generators. The accuracy of each marker to predict mortality was assessed using
163 receiver operating characteristic curves (ROC). The sensitivity, specificity, positive
164 likelihood ratio (+LR), and negative likelihood ratio (–LR) were calculated. +LR
165 represents the ratio of the true positive rate to the false positive rate. –LR represents
166 the ratio of the false negative rate to the true negative rate. These two parameters,
167 which are not influenced by prevalence rate, are stable and objective for assessing
168 diagnostic value. Combination models were developed using binary logistic
169 regression analyses. Overall survival curves were calculated using the Kaplan–Meier
170 method, and differences in survival rates were compared using the log-rank test.

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3 171 Univariate and multivariate Cox proportional hazard models were used to estimate the
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5 172 significance and independence of the relationship of each marker and mortality. The
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7 173 variables with a p-value <0.1 in univariate analysis were included in a multivariate
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10 174 Cox proportional hazard regression model. A p-value <0.05 was considered
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12 175 statistically significant. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS ver. 19.0
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14 176 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

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18 178 **RESULTS**

19 179 **Patient characteristics**

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22 180 A total of 359 AP patients (197 MAP, 76 MSAP, and 86 SAP) were enrolled in the
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24 181 study. The predefined probability of type I error was 0.05 ($\alpha=0.05$), and the sample
25
26 182 size was large enough to guarantee 0.90 of test power ($\beta=0.1$). Forty-five patients
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28 183 were excluded from the analysis, including those with traumatic pancreatitis (n=1),
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30 184 autoimmune pancreatitis (n=5), diabetes mellitus (n=7), tumour (n=7), liver failure
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32 185 (n=2), or incomplete medical records or who were lost to follow-up (n=23). Tables 1
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34 186 and 2 show the baseline characteristics of the patients. There were no significant
35
36 187 differences in age (p=0.352), aetiology (p=0.875), or sex (p=0.919) among the three
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38 188 groups (MAP, MSAP, and SAP). As the illness worsened, CRP, RDW, and NLR
39
40 189 gradually increased, but PNI decreased (all p<0.05; Table 1). LMR decreased
41
42 190 significantly (p<0.001) in MSAP compared with MAP patients, but there was no
43
44 191 significant difference between MSAP and SAP patients (p=0.883).

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47 192 Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors were older (p=0.001) and had
48
49 193 higher CRP (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.010), RDW (p<0.001), and NLR (p<0.001).
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51 194 Conversely, lymphocyte count (p<0.001), platelets (p=0.001), albumin (p<0.001),
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3 195 LMR ($p<0.001$), and PNI ($p<0.001$) were lower in non-survivors than in survivors
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5 196 (Table 2).
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9 198 **The relationship between markers and severity of AP**

10 199 The multivariate logistic regression models revealed that high CRP (>110 vs. ≤ 110
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12 200 mg/L, adjusted odd ratio (OR)=8.251, 95%CI: 3.897–17.468, $p<0.001$), RDW (>13.0
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14 201 vs. $\leq 13.0\%$, adjusted OR= 2.533, 95%CI: 1.365–4.702, $p=0.003$), and low PNI (<41.1
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16 202 vs. ≥ 41.1 , adjusted OR=7.753, 95%CI: 3.400–17.680, $p<0.001$) were independent
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18 203 factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP (Table 3).
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24 205 **The markers' power for predicting 100 days mortality**

25 206 The enrolled 359 patients with AP were randomly grouped into two cohorts: the
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27 207 estimation cohort ($n=181$) and the validation cohort ($n=178$). No significant difference
28
29 208 was observed between the estimation and the validation cohorts in all characteristics
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31 209 (Supplementary Table S1). ROC curves of the estimation cohort were constructed to
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33 210 evaluate the ability of each marker to predict 100 days mortality in AP. Table 4 shows
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35 211 the area under the receiver operating characteristic curves (AUC) and optimal cut-off
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37 212 values. The ability of NLR to predict mortality (AUC=0.804, $p<0.001$) was good;
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39 213 those of PNI (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), CRP (AUC=0.774, $p<0.001$), RDW
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41 214 (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), and LMR (AUC=0.744, $p<0.001$) were fair. The NLR had
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43 215 the largest AUC, and RDW and PNI had the highest sensitivity and specificity,
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45 216 respectively. Therefore, these three markers were selected for combination. The AUC
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47 217 for NLR+PNI, NLR+RDW, and PNI+RDW were 0.825 (95%CI: 0.761–0.877); 0.854
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49 218 (95%CI: 0.794–0.902), and 0.806 (95%CI: 0.741–0.861), respectively (Fig. 1). There
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219 were no significant differences in AUC for combined index and NLR ($p=0.699$;
220 $p=0.167$; $p=0.975$, respectively).

221 For NLR, the optimal cut-off value for mortality prediction was 16.64, with a
222 sensitivity of 82.4% and specificity of 75.6%. RDW had the highest sensitivity
223 (94.1%) and lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11), so it was a reliable predictive
224 index for excluding mortality in AP patients. PNI had the highest specificity (88.4%)
225 and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable for use as a confirmed
226 index among the indexes assessed.

227 In the validation cohort, AUC for NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR were 0.851
228 (95%CI: 0.790–0.900), 0.753 (95%CI: 0.683–0.815), 0.708 (95%CI: 0.635–0.773),
229 0.791 (95%CI: 0.724–0.848), and 0.677 (95%CI: 0.603–0.745), respectively. There
230 were no significant differences in AUC for NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR
231 between the estimation and validation cohorts ($p=0.477$, $p=0.809$, $p=0.437$, $p=0.782$,
232 and $p=0.455$, respectively).

234 **Survival analysis**

235 AP patients were stratified into groups by cut-off values. Kaplan–Meier survival
236 curves demonstrate the relationships between inflammation-based prognostic markers
237 and overall survival of patients with AP (Fig. 2A–E). Elevated NLR ($p<0.001$), CRP
238 ($p<0.001$), and RDW ($p<0.001$) were associated with increased probability of death.
239 Conversely, decreased PNI ($p<0.001$) and LMR ($p=0.001$) were associated with
240 decreased overall survival.

241 According to the cut-off values for the factors, low NLR (≤ 16.64), low CRP
242 (≤ 162.2 mg/L), low RDW ($\leq 13.0\%$), high PNI (>33.1), and high LMR (>1.40) were
243 selected as references. Univariate analysis and Cox regression revealed that age

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3 244 (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.001), NLR (p<0.001), PNI (p<0.001), CRP (p<0.001), RDW
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5 245 (p<0.001), and LMR (p=0.002) were associated with AP mortality (Table 5). These
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7 246 factors were evaluated using multivariate Cox regression. Age (HR=4.039, 95%CI:
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9 247 1.873–8.713, p<0.001), NLR (HR=4.726, 95%CI: 1.627–13.726, p=0.004), CRP
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11 248 (HR=3.503, 95%CI: 1.534–7.999, p=0.003), RDW (HR=3.139, 95%CI: 1.277–7.714,
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13 249 p=0.013), and PNI (HR=2.641, 95%CI: 1.248–5.590, p=0.011) were independently
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15 250 associated with mortality of AP (Table 5).
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21 252 **DISCUSSION**

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23 253 AP is an inflammatory disease, with mortality arising mainly from organ failure or
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25 254 infected pancreatic necrosis.⁴ Our study estimated the prognostic value of various
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27 255 inflammation-based prognostic markers for predicting mortality of AP. According to
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29 256 classifications of AUC,^{20 21} the ability of the NLR to predict mortality was good,
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31 257 while those of PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR were fair. Cox regression analysis revealed
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33 258 that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with mortality of
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35 259 AP. Additionally, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with the
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37 260 occurrence of SAP in AP patients.
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41 261 NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI are inexpensive, convenient, and readily available in
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43 262 clinical settings. From examination of AUC, NLR had the best performance. With a
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45 263 NLR >16.64 at the time of admission, the risk of dying increased 3.726-fold
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47 264 compared with NLR ≤16.64. RDW was the most reliable marker for excluding death
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49 265 in AP patients, owing to its lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11). PNI had the
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51 266 highest specificity (88.4%) and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable
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53 267 to be a confirmed index among the indexes assessed. However, fluctuations in the
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55 268 NLR and CRP can be influenced by the use of antibiotics; therefore, NLR and CRP
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3 269 are not suitable for patients undergoing intensive use of antibiotics. Similarly, blood
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5 270 transfusion and parenteral nutrition may affect RDW and PNI, respectively, so the
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7 271 predictive value of RDW and PNI in these patients was discounted.
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10 272 In AP, inflammation propagates and promotes tissue destruction via activation of
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12 273 a cascade of inflammatory cytokines, proteolytic enzymes, and oxygen free radicals.¹⁹
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14 274 ²² Neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes are the three main types of white blood
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16 275 cells (WBC). Neutrophils play a key role in the development of local tissue
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18 276 destruction and systemic complications of SAP.²³ Depletion of neutrophils has been
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20 277 associated with an improved prognosis of AP.²³ The percentage of immature
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22 278 neutrophilic granulocytes might be used clinically as a simple early predictor of an
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24 279 adverse outcome in SAP.²⁴ Additionally, recent studies revealed that the extent of
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26 280 lymphopenia was associated with disease severity.²⁵⁻²⁷ Lymphopenia has been
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28 281 reported to have independent prognostic value for some diseases,^{19 26-29} including AP.
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30 282 Takeyama *et al.* found that impairment of cellular immunity caused by peripheral
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32 283 lymphocyte apoptosis was linked to the subsequent development of infectious
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34 284 complications in AP.²⁸ Monocytes produce various cytokines and inflammatory
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36 285 mediators that further amplify inflammatory cell recruitment into the pancreas as well
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38 286 as distant organs such as the lungs.³⁰ Similar to neutrophils, a protective effect was
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40 287 also found by depleting macrophages in a mouse model of AP.³¹ Theoretically, NLR
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42 288 and LMR, which combine two opposing parameters, should be more accurate than
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44 289 either parameter alone. We found that the NLR had the greatest prognostic value of
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46 290 all the factors we evaluated. It is, however, important to apply the NLR with caution
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48 291 in clinical settings. Broad-spectrum antibiotics with good tissue penetration, which are
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50 292 essential medicines in the treatment of SAP, can affect WBC by reducing
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52 293 inflammation. Thus, the prognostic value of NLR in AP is uncertain if the effect of
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3 294 antibiotic treatment is not taken into account.³² For this reason, the neutrophil and
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5 295 lymphocyte counts used in this study were from the first complete blood cell count,
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7 296 conducted during the emergency visit. We confirmed that the enrolled patients were
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9 297 untreated at that time; consequently, our results are most likely applicable to untreated
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11 298 patients. Unlike for the NLR, the predictive ability of the LMR was only fair, and was
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13 299 not independently associated with overall survival in AP.
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16 300 Serum albumin is a negative acute phase response reactant, and reflects the
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18 301 body's nutritional status. Albumin <25 g/L was an independent prognostic factor
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20 302 related to a poor prognosis of AP.³³ Variation of albumin within 24 h has been
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22 303 identified as a risk factor for a poor prognosis of critically ill patients in the early
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24 304 stages of SAP.³⁴ The PNI, which includes serum albumin and lymphocyte count, is an
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26 305 independent predictor of poor overall survival in patients with hepatocellular
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28 306 carcinoma.³⁵ To the best of our knowledge, few studies have reported on the
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30 307 application of PNI for predicting mortality of AP, but we found that it was an
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32 308 independent prognostic factor, and was suitable as a confirmed marker.
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36 309 Numerous studies have reported RDW as a strong independent prognostic factor
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38 310 in various diseases and conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, rheumatoid
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40 311 arthritis, cancer, and critical illnesses.^{18 36-38} Our results are consistent with the study
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42 312 by Yao J *et al.*,¹⁸ who reported a significant association between RDW and mortality
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44 313 of patients with AP. Additionally, we found that RDW was most suitable as a reliable
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46 314 excluding marker among the markers we assessed. The mechanisms underlying the
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48 315 association between RDW and mortality in AP remain unclear. The obvious
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50 316 metabolic abnormalities in non-survivors of AP, including inflammation, oxidative
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52 317 stress, poor nutritional status, and persistent organ failure, lead to deregulation of red
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54 318 blood cell homeostasis involving both impaired erythropoiesis and abnormal red
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3 319 blood cell survival.³⁸ RDW reflects these impairments in homeostasis, but only further
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5 320 research can confirm this speculation.
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7 321 The prognostic markers evaluated in this study are direct or combined markers of
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9 322 systemic inflammation that are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available
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11 323 laboratory tests. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to compare the
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13 324 prognostic value of these markers for predicting mortality in patients with AP
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15 325 simultaneously. Additionally, suitable excluding and identifying markers were found.
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18 326 Some potential limitations of the study should be noted. Although we have taken
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20 327 special care to avoid sources of bias and confounding, some potential bias may still
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22 328 exist in this retrospective, single-centre study. Information available at the beginning
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24 329 of the study may have affected the selection of the study participants, although the
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26 330 medical records and laboratory data were collected separately by two people. The
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28 331 reasons for incomplete medical records or why patients were lost to follow-up (n=23)
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30 332 are not known. These patients were excluded from the analyses. As a result, a larger,
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32 333 prospective study is needed to validate the results. Second, only the first set of
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34 334 admission blood results were investigated. As factors change with time, they should
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36 335 be surveyed in the future because of the rapid onset of inflammation. Third, the
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38 336 typical prediction models, such as APACHE II score, should be included in future
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40 337 research. Fourth, for better validity, +LR should be near 10, and -LR should be 0.2.
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42 338 Unfortunately, no marker examined had perfect +LR and -LR simultaneously.
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44 339 However, these markers are still valuable based on their acceptable AUC. Finally, we
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46 340 only described the association of each of the predictors with mortality of AP; the
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48 341 underlying mechanisms need to be investigated.
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52 342 In conclusion, we found that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently
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54 343 associated with overall survival of AP. NLR had the best overall performance, RDW
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3 344 was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death, and PNI was a good predictive
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5 345 marker for death. When applying these markers, any possible influence from therapy
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7 346 should be considered.
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11 348 **Abbreviations**

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14 349 AP, acute pancreatitis; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve;
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16 350 CI, confidence interval; CRP, C-reactive protein; HR, hazard ratio; LMR,
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18 351 lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio; +LR, positive likelihood
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21 352 ratio; MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis;
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23 353 NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; OR, odd ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index;
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25 354 RDW, red cell distribution width; ROC, receiver operating characteristic curve; SAP,
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27 355 severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count.
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31 357 **Acknowledgments**

32 358 We thank Edanz Group Ltd. for helping edit the English of the final manuscript.
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37 360 **Contributors**

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40 361 R.G. and Y.L. designed the experiments. R.G. and Y.L. contributed to the data
41
42 362 collection. Y.Z. conducted the data analysis. Y.L., R.G. and L.F. wrote the manuscript.
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45 363 All authors reviewed the manuscript.
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49 365 **Funding**

50
51
52 366 This work was financially supported by grants from the Zhejiang Provincial Natural
53
54 367 Science Foundation of China (LY15H190002) and the Department of Education
55
56 368 Foundation of Zhejiang Province, China (Y201330146).
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5 370 **Competing interests**6
7 371 None declared.8
9 37210
11 373 **Patient consent**12
13 374 Obtained.14
15 37516
17 376 **Ethics approval**18
19 377 This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the First Affiliated Hospital of20
21 378 Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China22
23 37924
25 380 **Provenance and peer review**26
27 381 Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.28
29 38230
31 383 **Data sharing statement**32
33 384 No additional data are available.34
35 38536
37 386 **Open access**38
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Table 1 Demographics and laboratory findings in patients with acute pancreatitis

Variables	1. MAP(n=197)	2. MSAP(n=76)	3. SAP(n=86)	p value		
				all groups	1 vs. 2	2 vs. 3
Age (years)	51.43 ± 16.00	48.47 ± 13.28	50.69 ± 14.61	0.352	0.446	1.000
Male (%)	108(54.8%)	41(53.9%)	49(57.0%)	0.919	0.896	0.699
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	52%/12%/11%/25%	51%/16%/13%/20%	47%/15%/14%/24%	0.875	0.664	0.892
WBC (×10 ⁹ /L)	11.5 (3.1–32.0)	14.1 (4.5–36.8)	16.05 (5.9–38.4)	<0.001	<0.001	0.278
Lymphocyte (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.1 (0.2–9.4)	1.0 (0.2–2.6)	0.80 (0.2–2.9)	<0.001	0.004	0.089
Platelet (×10 ⁹ /L)	202 (21–502)	193 (58–548)	163 (27–540)	0.004	0.376	0.046
Albumin (g/L)	38.29 ± 5.07	34.38 ± 6.39	29.99 ± 5.35	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	53.9 (0.7–386)	133.6 (3.2–436.5)	196.1 (27.1–426.7)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13–5191)	222 (27–3845)	581 (16–2377)	0.141	0.083	0.056
RDW (%)	12.8 (11.4–19.2)	13.0 (11.3–16.3)	13.7 (11.7–23.6)	<0.001	0.013	0.014
NLR	8.46 (1.33–55)	14.60 (1.73–60)	19.65 (3.57–53.67)	<0.001	<0.001	0.020
LMR	1.88 (0.28–13.33)	1.03 (0.29–5.33)	1.14 (0.22–6.32)	<0.001	<0.001	0.883
PNI	44.53 ± 6.63	39.36 ± 6.71	34.55 ± 6.02	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Mortality (%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	31(36.0%)	<0.001	–	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean ± SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

1 vs. 2, MAP group vs. MSAP group; 2 vs. 3, MSAP group vs. SAP group.

MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Table 2 Demographics and laboratory findings in survivors and non-survivors of acute pancreatitis

Variables	Survivors(n=328)	Non-survivors(n=31)	p value
Age (years)	49.84 ± 14.88	58.90 ± 15.60	0.001
Male (%)	179(54.6%)	19(61.3%)	0.472
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	50%/13%/12%/25%	58%/19%/10%/13%	0.346
WBC ($\times 10^9/L$)	12.85 (3.1–38.4)	18.5 (6.5–29.3)	0.001
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^9/L$)	1.08 (0.17–9.40)	0.60 (0.30–1.60)	<0.001
Platelet ($\times 10^9/L$)	197 (21–548)	159 (27–376)	0.001
Albumin (g/L)	35.95 ± 6.30	30.44 ± 5.54	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	98.6 (0.7–436.5)	239.2 (27.1–398.2)	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	343.5 (13–5191)	909 (16–2377)	0.010
RDW (%)	13 (11.3–19.2)	13.8 (12.6–23.6)	<0.001
NLR	10.47 (1.33–60.0)	25.0 (8.67–53.67)	<0.001
PNI	41.71 ± 7.50	34.00 ± 6.35	<0.001
LMR	1.51 (0.22–13.33)	1.13 (0.24–2.26)	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean ± SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

Table 3 Odds ratios of prognostic factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP

Factors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value
NLR (>11.36 vs. ≤11.36)	3.707(2.173-6.326)	<0.001	3.578 (2.082-6.149)	<0.001	1.463(0.711-3.010)	0.301
CRP (>110 vs. ≤110mg/L)	9.867(5.116-19.030)	<0.001	12.609 (6.304-25.218)	<0.001	8.251(3.897-17.468)	<0.001
RDW (>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	3.368(2.003-5.663)	<0.001	3.529 (2.076-5.998)	<0.001	2.533(1.365-4.702)	0.003
PNI (<41.1 vs. ≥41.1)	9.951(5.055-19.589)	<0.001	11.356 (5.665-22.766)	<0.001	7.753(3.400-17.680)	<0.001
LMR (<1.43 vs. ≥1.43)	2.564(1.539-4.271)	<0.001	2.552 (1.524-4.274)	<0.001	0.722(0.355-1.471)	0.370

Model 1: unadjusted model.

Model 2: adjusted for age, gender, and amylase.

Model 3: NLR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR; CRP was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, RDW, PNI, and LMR; RDW was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, NLR, PNI, and LMR; PNI was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and LMR; LMR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI.

AP, acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Table 4 Discriminatory ability of inflammation-based markers for predicting mortality in AP patients

Index	AUC(95% CI)	p value ^{&}	Cut-off [#]	Sensitivity	Specificity	+LR	-LR
Training cohort							
NLR	0.804(0.738-0.859)	<0.001	16.64	82.4%	75.6%	3.38	0.23
CRP	0.774(0.706-0.833)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	76.5%	73.8%	2.92	0.32
RDW	0.769(0.700-0.828)	<0.001	13.0%	94.1%	54.3%	2.06	0.11
PNI	0.769(0.701-0.828)	<0.001	33.1	58.8%	88.4%	5.08	0.47
LMR	0.744(0.674-0.806)	<0.001	1.40	82.4%	57.3%	1.93	0.31
Validation cohort							
NLR	0.851(0.790-0.900)	<0.001	16.64	85.7%	73.8%	3.27	0.19
CRP	0.753(0.683-0.815)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	71.4%	65.2%	2.06	0.44
RDW	0.708(0.635-0.773)	0.001	13.0%	85.7%	50.0%	1.71	0.29
PNI	0.791(0.724-0.848)	<0.001	33.1	42.9%	88.4%	3.70	0.65
LMR	0.677(0.603-0.745)	0.015	1.40	78.6%	49.4%	1.55	0.43
Overall							
NLR	0.823(0.780-0.861)	<0.001	16.64	83.9%	74.4%	3.27	0.22
CRP	0.762(0.714-0.805)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	74.2%	69.8%	2.46	0.37
RDW	0.742(0.693-0.786)	<0.001	13.0%	90.3%	49.7%	1.80	0.19
PNI	0.781(0.734-0.822)	<0.001	33.1	51.6%	88.4%	4.46	0.55
LMR	0.710(0.660-0.757)	<0.001	1.40	77.4%	54.0%	1.68	0.42

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; CI, confidence interval; +LR, positive likelihood ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio.

[&] The p-value is comparing the AUC with 0.5.

[#] The cut-off values were derived from a training cohort.

Table 5 Prognostic factors of overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis by univariate and multivariate analyses

Factors	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis	
	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value
Age (>63 vs. ≤63 years)	5.384(2.653-10.925)	<0.001	4.039(1.873-8.713)	<0.001
Gender (female vs. male)	0.767(0.372-1.579)	0.471		
Amylase (>618 vs. ≤618U/L)	3.544(1.699-7.526)	0.001	2.173(0.965-4.891)	0.061
NLR(>16.64 vs. ≤16.64)	13.130(5.041-34.205)	<0.001	4.726(1.627-13.726)	0.004
CRP(>162.2 vs. ≤162.2mg/L)	6.127(2.740-13.701)	<0.001	3.503(1.534-7.999)	0.003
RDW(>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	4.929(2.022-12.017)	<0.001	3.139(1.277-7.714)	0.013
PNI(≤33.1 vs. >33.1)	6.912(3.414-13.991)	<0.001	2.641(1.248-5.590)	0.011
LMR(≤1.40 vs. >1.40)	3.797(1.636-8.813)	0.002	1.036(0.403-2.659)	0.942

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution

width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Figure Legends

Fig. 1. ROC curves analysis for predicting mortality by NLR and combined markers in the estimation cohort.

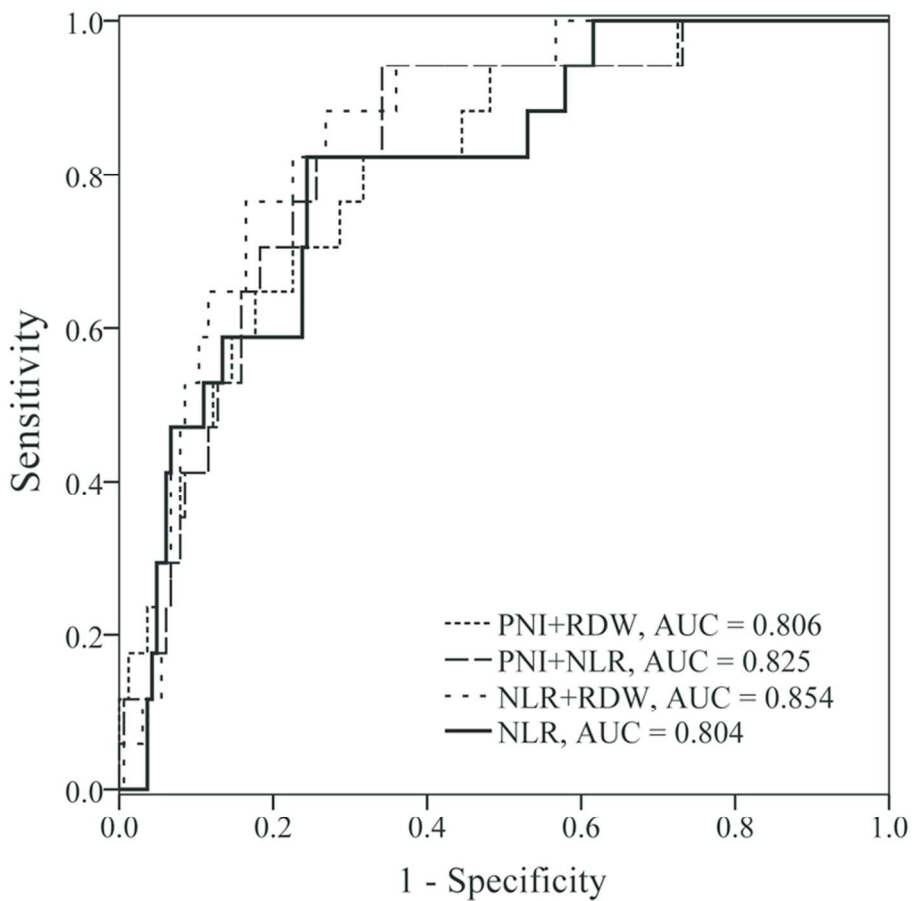
ROC, receiver operating characteristic; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Fig. 2. Relationship between inflammation-based prognostic markers and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis

A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively.

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

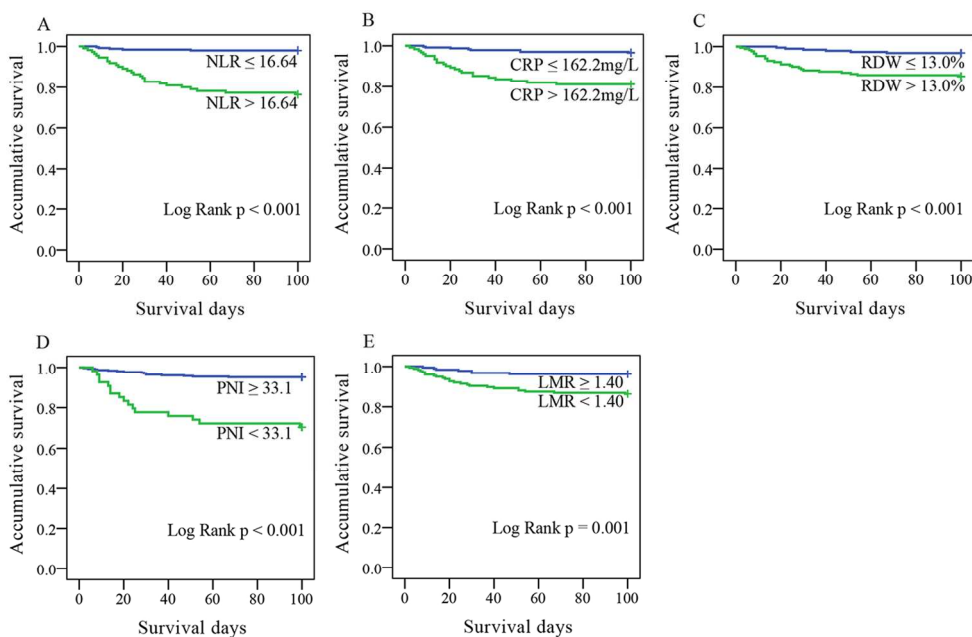
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ROC, receiver operating characteristic; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

75x72mm (300 x 300 DPI)





A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively. NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

170x115mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Supplementary Table S1 Demographics and laboratory findings in estimation and validation cohorts

Variable	All patients (n=359)	Training set(n=181)	Validation set(n =178)	p value
Age (years)	50.63 ±15.13	51.66 ± 15.69	49.58 ± 14.51	0.194
Male [N (%)]	198(55.2%)	96(53.0%)	102(57.3%)	0.417
Aetiology (1/2/3/4) %	54.3/9.7/12.0/24.0	55.2/12.7/12.2/19.9	53.4/6.7/11.8/28.1	0.118
WBC ($\times 10^9/L$)	12.9(3.1-38.4)	13.3 (3.1–38.4)	12.9 (4.2–36.8)	0.942
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^9/L$)	1.00 (0.17–9.40)	1.00 (0.20–9.40)	1.00 (0.17–4.80)	0.965
Platelet ($\times 10^9/L$)	192 (21–548)	193 (27–502)	191.5 (21–548)	0.354
Albumin (g/L)	35.47 ±6.42	35.72 ± 6.61	35.22 ± 6.24	0.456
CRP (mg/L)	110 (0.7–436.5)	102.3 (0.8–436.5)	116.85 (0.7–419.4)	0.081
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13–5191)	501 (13–5191)	330 (16–4927)	0.238
RDW (%)	13.0(11.3-23.6)	13.1 (11.3–19.2)	13.0 (11.4–23.6)	0.421
NLR	11.36 (1.33–60.0)	11.50 (1.33–55.0)	11.18 (1.39–60.0)	0.786
PNI	41.05 ±7.72	41.22 ± 7.74	40.87 ± 7.71	0.670
LMR	1.43(0.22–13.33)	1.48 (0.24–13.33)	1.36 (0.22–10.00)	0.367
Mortality [N (%)]	31(8.6%)	17(9.4%)	14(7.9%)	0.607

Continuous variables are presented as mean ±SD or median (range).

p value was training set versus validation set.

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

Section/Topic	Item	Checklist Item	Page
Title and abstract			
Title	1	Identify the study as developing and/or validating a multivariable prediction model, the target population, and the outcome to be predicted.	1
Abstract	2	Provide a summary of objectives, study design, setting, participants, sample size, predictors, outcome, statistical analysis, results, and conclusions.	3,4
Introduction			
Background and objectives	3a	Explain the medical context (including whether diagnostic or prognostic) and rationale for developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including references to existing models.	5,6
	3b	Specify the objectives, including whether the study describes the development or validation of the model or both.	6
Methods			
Source of data	4a	Describe the study design or source of data (e.g., randomized trial, cohort, or registry data), separately for the development and validation data sets, if applicable.	6
	4b	Specify the key study dates, including start of accrual; end of accrual; and, if applicable, end of follow-up.	6,7
Participants	5a	Specify key elements of the study setting (e.g., primary care, secondary care, general population) including number and location of centres.	6,7
	5b	Describe eligibility criteria for participants.	6, 7
	5c	Give details of treatments received, if relevant.	Not relevant
Outcome	6a	Clearly define the outcome that is predicted by the prediction model, including how and when assessed.	7
	6b	Report any actions to blind assessment of the outcome to be predicted.	7
Predictors	7a	Clearly define all predictors used in developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including how and when they were measured.	7,8
	7b	Report any actions to blind assessment of predictors for the outcome and other predictors.	7,8
Sample size	8	Explain how the study size was arrived at.	9
Missing data	9	Describe how missing data were handled (e.g., complete-case analysis, single imputation, multiple imputation) with details of any imputation method.	9
Statistical analysis methods	10a	Describe how predictors were handled in the analyses.	8,9
	10b	Specify type of model, all model-building procedures (including any predictor selection), and method for internal validation.	8,9
	10d	Specify all measures used to assess model performance and, if relevant, to compare multiple models.	8,9
Risk groups	11	Provide details on how risk groups were created, if done.	8,9
Results			
Participants	13a	Describe the flow of participants through the study, including the number of participants with and without the outcome and, if applicable, a summary of the follow-up time. A diagram may be helpful.	9
	13b	Describe the characteristics of the participants (basic demographics, clinical features, available predictors), including the number of participants with missing data for predictors and outcome.	9,10 Table1 and 2
Model development	14a	Specify the number of participants and outcome events in each analysis.	9 Table1 and 2
	14b	If done, report the unadjusted association between each candidate predictor and outcome.	10,11, 12, Table 3 and 5
Model specification	15a	Present the full prediction model to allow predictions for individuals (i.e., all regression coefficients, and model intercept or baseline survival at a given time point).	10,11, Table 3 and 5
	15b	Explain how to use the prediction model.	10,11
Model performance	16	Report performance measures (with CIs) for the prediction model.	10,11, Table3 and 5
Discussion			
Limitations	18	Discuss any limitations of the study (such as nonrepresentative sample, few events per predictor, missing data).	15
Interpretation	19b	Give an overall interpretation of the results, considering objectives, limitations, and results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence.	12-15
Implications	20	Discuss the potential clinical use of the model and implications for future research.	12,13, 15



TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

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Other information			
Supplementary information	21	Provide information about the availability of supplementary resources, such as study protocol, Web calculator, and data sets.	Yes
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study.	16

We recommend using the TRIPOD Checklist in conjunction with the TRIPOD Explanation and Elaboration document.

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BMJ Open

Comparison of the prognostic values of inflammation markers in patients with acute pancreatitis: a retrospective cohort study

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2016-013206.R2
Article Type:	Research
Date Submitted by the Author:	05-Jan-2017
Complete List of Authors:	Li, Yuanyuan; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Zhao, Ying; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Feng, Limin; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine Guo, Renyong; The First Affiliated Hospital, College of Medicine, Zhejiang University, Department of Laboratory Medicine
Primary Subject Heading:	Gastroenterology and hepatology
Secondary Subject Heading:	Diagnostics
Keywords:	acute pancreatitis, mortality, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio, prognostic nutritional index

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28 **ABSTRACT**

29 **Objectives:** Inflammation-based prognostic markers (neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio
30 [NLR], prognostic nutritional index [PNI], red cell distribution width [RDW], and
31 lymphocyte-monocyte ratio [LMR]) are associated with overall survival in some
32 diseases. This study assessed their prognostic value in mortality and severity in acute
33 pancreatitis (AP).

34 **Design:** A retrospective cohort study.

35 **Setting:** Patients with AP were recruited from the emergency department at our
36 hospital.

37 **Participants:** A total of 359 AP patients (31 non-survivors) were enrolled.

38 **Primary and secondary outcome measures:** Mortality and severity of AP were the
39 primary and secondary outcome measures, respectively. Biochemistry and
40 haematology results of the first test after admission were collected. Independent
41 relationships between severe AP (SAP) and markers were assessed using multivariate
42 logistic regression models. Mortality prediction ability was evaluated using receiver
43 operating characteristic (ROC) curves. Overall survival was evaluated using the
44 Kaplan–Meier method, with differences compared using the log-rank test.
45 Independent relationships between mortality and each predictor were estimated using
46 Cox proportional hazard models.

47 **Results:** Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors had higher RDW ($p<0.001$),
48 higher NLR ($p<0.001$), lower LMR ($p<0.001$), and lower PNI ($p<0.001$) at baseline.
49 C-reactive protein (CRP) [odd ratio (OR)=8.251, $p<0.001$], RDW (OR=2.533,
50 $p=0.003$), and PNI (OR=7.753, $p<0.001$) were independently associated with the
51 occurrence of SAP. For predicting mortality, NLR had the largest area under the ROC
52 curve (0.804, $p<0.001$), with a 16.64 cut-off value, 82.4% sensitivity, and 75.0%

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3 53 specificity. RDW was a reliable marker for excluding death owing to its lowest
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5 54 negative likelihood ratio (0.11). NLR (hazard ratio (HR) =4.726, p=0.004), CRP
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7 55 (HR=3.503, p=0.003), RDW (HR=3.139, p=0.013), and PNI (HR=2.641, p=0.011)
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9
10 56 were independently associated with mortality of AP.

11 **Conclusions:** NLR was the most powerful marker of overall survival in this patient
12
13 series.
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15 16 17 18 19 60 **Strengths and limitations of this study**

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22 61 • Compared with survivors of acute pancreatitis (AP), non-survivors had higher
23
24 62 red cell distribution width (RDW) and neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR),
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26 63 and lower lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR) and prognostic nutritional index
27
28 64 (PNI) at baseline.
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31 65 • NLR exhibited a higher area under the receiver operating characteristic curve
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33 66 for the prediction of mortality compared with other markers.
34
35 67 • RDW was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death.
36
37
38 68 • NLR, PNI, C-reactive protein, and RDW were independently associated with
39
40 69 overall survival of AP.
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43 70 • This was a retrospective cohort analysis.
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73 **INTRODUCTION**

74 Acute pancreatitis (AP) is rapid-onset inflammation of the pancreas that varies in
75 severity from a self-limiting mild illness to rapidly progressive multiple organ failure.
76 Statistics suggest that 10–20% of patients with AP develop severe acute pancreatitis
77 (SAP),¹ which usually has an unfavourable disease progression and is associated with
78 a poor prognosis.^{2 3} Prediction of disease severity can guide the management of
79 patients with AP and improve the outcome. Organ failure and infected pancreatic
80 necrosis are common causes of mortality in such patients,⁴ and a new international
81 multidisciplinary classification of SAP incorporates both events as determinants of
82 severity.⁵ The predictive values of various markers, such as Acute Physiology and
83 Chronic Health Evaluation II (APACHE II) and Bedside Index of Severity in Acute
84 Pancreatitis scores, C-reactive protein (CRP), and procalcitonin, have been previously
85 assessed.⁶⁻⁸ A systematic review concluded it was justifiable to use blood urea
86 nitrogen after 48 h of hospital admission for predicting persistent organ failure.⁹ In
87 clinical studies, most studies have focused on disease severity, and only a few have
88 directly investigated the relationship between predictors and mortality of AP.
89 Furthermore, no reliable predictor of persistent organ failure within 48 h of admission
90 has been identified.⁹

91 There is increasing evidence that the presence of a systemic inflammatory
92 response is associated with poor survival in patients with various aetiologies,
93 including malignancy.¹⁰⁻¹⁷ Many direct or combined markers of systemic
94 inflammation are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available laboratory tests.
95 Red cell distribution width (RDW),¹⁰ neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio (NLR), prognostic
96 nutritional index (PNI),¹¹ and lymphocyte-monocyte ratio (LMR)¹² have been used to

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3 97 predict the prognosis of disease. RDW was found to be an independent marker of
4
5 98 short- and long-term prognosis in intensive care units.¹⁰ NLR at admission served as
6
7 99 an independent predictor of 3-month mortality rates in acute-on-chronic liver failure
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10 100 patients.¹³ Increased pre-treatment LMR was associated with a significantly more
11
12 101 favourable prognosis in patients with solid tumours.¹² Despite this evidence, very few
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14 102 studies have focused on the direct relationship between inflammation-based
15
16 103 prognostic markers and mortality of AP. A cross-sectional study found a significant
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18 104 association between RDW and mortality in patients with AP.¹⁸ Another study
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20 105 investigated the prognostic value of NLR in AP and determined an optimal ratio for
21
22 106 prediction of severity.¹⁹

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24
25 107 To the best of our knowledge, the current study is the first to simultaneously
26
27 108 compare the prognostic value of these inflammation-based prognostic markers (NLR,
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29 109 PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR) of mortality in patients with AP.
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33 34 111 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

35 36 112 **Participants**

37
38 113 This retrospective cohort analysis consecutively enrolled a series of patients with AP
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40 114 who were admitted to the emergency department at our hospital between 1 July 2013
41
42 115 and 18 August 2015. A diagnosis of AP required two of three features: (1) prolonged
43
44 116 abdominal pain characteristic of AP, (2) threefold elevation of serum amylase and/or
45
46 117 lipase levels above the normal range, and (3) characteristic findings of AP on
47
48 118 abdominal ultrasonography and/or computed tomography scan.¹ Mild acute
49
50 119 pancreatitis (MAP) was defined as an absence of organ failure and an absence of local
51
52 120 or systemic complications.¹ Moderately severe acute pancreatitis (MSAP) was defined
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54 121 as no evidence of persistent organ failure, but the presence of local or systemic
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3 122 complications and/or organ failure that resolved within 48 h. SAP was defined as
4
5 123 persistent organ failure (>48 h).¹ Patients with recurrent pancreatitis were enrolled
6
7 124 only at first admission. Patients with traumatic pancreatitis, autoimmune pancreatitis,
8
9 125 diabetes mellitus, tumour, or liver failure were excluded.

11 126 The prognostic information we focused on included overall survival and the
12
13 127 severity of the disease. All enrolled patients were followed for 100 days or until death.
14
15 128 All clinical data were retrieved from medical records. For AP patients, 100 days of
16
17 129 prognostic information (survival or non-survival) was obtained by checking medical
18
19 130 records or by contacting the patients' family members.
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25 132 **Ethics statement**

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27 133 Each participant provided written informed consent after being provided with an
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29 134 explanation of the study by phone, letter, or e-mail. The Ethics Committee of The
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31 135 First Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University College of Medicine approved the
32
33 136 consent procedure and experiment periods. The study was conducted in accordance
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35 137 with the ethical principles contained within the Declaration of Helsinki.
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40 139 **Demographic information and laboratory analysis**

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42 140 Demographic information, including age, sex, aetiology, and complication, was
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44 141 collected from medical records. Pre-treatment laboratory data, including complete
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46 142 blood counts, serum CRP, albumin, and amylase were obtained during the emergency
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48 143 visit. An XE-2100 haematology autoanalyzer (Sysmex Corp., Kobe, Japan), a Hitachi
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50 144 7600 chemistry analyser (Hitachi High-Technologies, Tokyo, Japan), and Roche
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52 145 reagents (Roche Diagnostics, Indianapolis, IN, USA) were used in the laboratory.
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146 We assessed the prognostic value of general inflammation-based prognostic
147 markers (NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR) for predicting the mortality of AP.
148 Additionally, their ability to predict the severity of AP (SAP or not SAP) was
149 assessed. NLR and LMR were ratios of two types of blood cell. PNI = albumin
150 (g/L) + 5 × total lymphocyte count (10⁹/L).

151

152 **Statistical analysis**

153 Variables are expressed as mean ± SD or median (range) and categorical data as
154 percentages, as appropriate. Differences between the two groups were assessed using
155 an independent sample *t*-test, Mann–Whitney U test, or χ^2 test, as appropriate.
156 Multiple comparisons were performed by one-way analysis of variance or
157 Kruskal–Wallis H tests, as appropriate. The Bonferroni method was used to adjust for
158 multiple comparisons. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were used to assess
159 whether the inflammation markers were independent factors for predicting SAP in
160 patients with AP by unadjusted and adjusted models successively. AP patients were
161 randomly divided into estimation and validation cohorts by random number
162 generators. The accuracy of each marker to predict mortality was assessed using
163 receiver operating characteristic curves (ROC). The sensitivity, specificity, positive
164 likelihood ratio (+LR), and negative likelihood ratio (–LR) were calculated. +LR
165 represents the ratio of the true positive rate to the false positive rate. –LR represents
166 the ratio of the false negative rate to the true negative rate. These two parameters,
167 which are not influenced by prevalence rate, are stable and objective for assessing
168 diagnostic value. Combination models were developed using binary logistic
169 regression analyses. Overall survival curves were calculated using the Kaplan–Meier
170 method, and differences in survival rates were compared using the log-rank test.

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3 171 Univariate and multivariate Cox proportional hazard models were used to estimate the
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5 172 significance and independence of the relationship of each marker and mortality. The
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7 173 variables with a p-value <0.1 in univariate analysis were included in a multivariate
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10 174 Cox proportional hazard regression model. A p-value <0.05 was considered
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12 175 statistically significant. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS ver. 19.0
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14 176 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

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18 178 **RESULTS**

19 179 **Patient characteristics**

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22 180 A total of 359 AP patients (197 MAP, 76 MSAP, and 86 SAP) were enrolled in the
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24 181 study. The predefined probability of type I error was 0.05 ($\alpha=0.05$), and the sample
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26 182 size was large enough to guarantee 0.90 of test power ($\beta=0.1$). Forty-five patients
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28 183 were excluded from the analysis, including those with traumatic pancreatitis (n=1),
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30 184 autoimmune pancreatitis (n=5), diabetes mellitus (n=7), tumour (n=7), liver failure
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32 185 (n=2), or incomplete medical records or who were lost to follow-up (n=23). Tables 1
33
34 186 and 2 show the baseline characteristics of the patients. There were no significant
35
36 187 differences in age (p=0.352), aetiology (p=0.875), or sex (p=0.919) among the three
37
38 188 groups (MAP, MSAP, and SAP). As the illness worsened, CRP, RDW, and NLR
39
40 189 gradually increased, but PNI decreased (all p<0.05; Table 1). LMR decreased
41
42 190 significantly (p<0.001) in MSAP compared with MAP patients, but there was no
43
44 191 significant difference between MSAP and SAP patients (p=0.883).

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47 192 Compared with survivors of AP, non-survivors were older (p=0.001) and had
48
49 193 higher CRP (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.010), RDW (p<0.001), and NLR (p<0.001).
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51 194 Conversely, lymphocyte count (p<0.001), platelets (p=0.001), albumin (p<0.001),
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3 195 LMR ($p<0.001$), and PNI ($p<0.001$) were lower in non-survivors than in survivors
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5 196 (Table 2).
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9 198 **The relationship between markers and severity of AP**

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11 199 The multivariate logistic regression models revealed that high CRP (>110 vs. ≤ 110
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13 200 mg/L, adjusted odd ratio (OR)=8.251, 95%CI: 3.897–17.468, $p<0.001$), RDW (>13.0
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15 201 vs. $\leq 13.0\%$, adjusted OR= 2.533, 95%CI: 1.365–4.702, $p=0.003$), and low PNI (<41.1
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17 202 vs. ≥ 41.1 , adjusted OR=7.753, 95%CI: 3.400–17.680, $p<0.001$) were independent
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19 203 factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP (Table 3).
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21 204

22 23 24 25 205 **The markers' power for predicting 100 days mortality**

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27 206 The enrolled 359 patients with AP were randomly grouped into two cohorts: the
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29 207 estimation cohort ($n=181$) and the validation cohort ($n=178$). No significant difference
30
31 208 was observed between the estimation and the validation cohorts in all characteristics
32
33 209 (Supplementary Table S1). ROC curves of the estimation cohort were constructed to
34
35 210 evaluate the ability of each marker to predict 100 days mortality in AP. Table 4 shows
36
37 211 the area under the receiver operating characteristic curves (AUC) and optimal cut-off
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39 212 values. The ability of NLR to predict mortality (AUC=0.804, $p<0.001$) was good;
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41 213 those of PNI (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), CRP (AUC=0.774, $p<0.001$), RDW
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43 214 (AUC=0.769, $p<0.001$), and LMR (AUC=0.744, $p<0.001$) were fair. The NLR had
44
45 215 the largest AUC, and RDW and PNI had the highest sensitivity and specificity,
46
47 216 respectively. Therefore, these three markers were selected for combination. The AUC
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49 217 for NLR+PNI, NLR+RDW, and PNI+RDW were 0.825 (95%CI: 0.761–0.877); 0.854
50
51 218 (95%CI: 0.794–0.902), and 0.806 (95%CI: 0.741–0.861), respectively (Fig. 1). There
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219 were no significant differences in AUC for combined index and NLR ($p=0.699$;
220 $p=0.167$; $p=0.975$, respectively).

221 For NLR, the optimal cut-off value for mortality prediction was 16.64, with a
222 sensitivity of 82.4% and specificity of 75.6%. RDW had the highest sensitivity
223 (94.1%) and lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11), so it was a reliable predictive
224 index for excluding mortality in AP patients. PNI had the highest specificity (88.4%)
225 and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable for use as a confirmed
226 index among the indexes assessed.

227 In the validation cohort, AUC for NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR were 0.851
228 (95%CI: 0.790–0.900), 0.753 (95%CI: 0.683–0.815), 0.708 (95%CI: 0.635–0.773),
229 0.791 (95%CI: 0.724–0.848), and 0.677 (95%CI: 0.603–0.745), respectively. There
230 were no significant differences in AUC for NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR
231 between the estimation and validation cohorts ($p=0.477$, $p=0.809$, $p=0.437$, $p=0.782$,
232 and $p=0.455$, respectively).

234 **Survival analysis**

235 AP patients were stratified into groups by cut-off values. Kaplan–Meier survival
236 curves demonstrate the relationships between inflammation-based prognostic markers
237 and overall survival of patients with AP (Fig. 2A–E). Elevated NLR ($p<0.001$), CRP
238 ($p<0.001$), and RDW ($p<0.001$) were associated with increased probability of death.
239 Conversely, decreased PNI ($p<0.001$) and LMR ($p=0.001$) were associated with
240 decreased overall survival.

241 According to the cut-off values for the factors, low NLR (≤ 16.64), low CRP
242 (≤ 162.2 mg/L), low RDW ($\leq 13.0\%$), high PNI (>33.1), and high LMR (>1.40) were
243 selected as references. Univariate analysis and Cox regression revealed that age

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3 244 (p<0.001), amylase (p=0.001), NLR (p<0.001), PNI (p<0.001), CRP (p<0.001), RDW
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5 245 (p<0.001), and LMR (p=0.002) were associated with AP mortality (Table 5). These
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7 246 factors were evaluated using multivariate Cox regression. Age (HR=4.039, 95%CI:
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9 247 1.873–8.713, p<0.001), NLR (HR=4.726, 95%CI: 1.627–13.726, p=0.004), CRP
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11 248 (HR=3.503, 95%CI: 1.534–7.999, p=0.003), RDW (HR=3.139, 95%CI: 1.277–7.714,
12
13 249 p=0.013), and PNI (HR=2.641, 95%CI: 1.248–5.590, p=0.011) were independently
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15 250 associated with mortality of AP (Table 5).
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21 252 **DISCUSSION**

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23 253 AP is an inflammatory disease, with mortality arising mainly from organ failure or
24
25 254 infected pancreatic necrosis.⁴ Our study estimated the prognostic value of various
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27 255 inflammation-based prognostic markers for predicting mortality of AP. According to
28
29 256 classifications of AUC,^{20 21} the ability of the NLR to predict mortality was good,
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31 257 while those of PNI, CRP, RDW, and LMR were fair. Cox regression analysis revealed
32
33 258 that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with mortality of
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35 259 AP. Additionally, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently associated with the
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37 260 occurrence of SAP in AP patients.
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41 261 NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI are inexpensive, convenient, and readily available in
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43 262 clinical settings. From examination of AUC, NLR had the best performance. With a
44
45 263 NLR >16.64 at the time of admission, the risk of dying increased 3.726-fold
46
47 264 compared with NLR ≤16.64. RDW was the most reliable marker for excluding death
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49 265 in AP patients, owing to its lowest negative likelihood ratio (0.11). PNI had the
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51 266 highest specificity (88.4%) and positive likelihood ratio (5.08), so it was most suitable
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53 267 to be a confirmed index among the indexes assessed. However, fluctuations in the
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55 268 NLR and CRP can be influenced by the use of antibiotics; therefore, NLR and CRP
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3 269 are not suitable for patients undergoing intensive use of antibiotics. Similarly, blood
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5 270 transfusion and parenteral nutrition may affect RDW and PNI, respectively, so the
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7 271 predictive value of RDW and PNI in these patients was discounted.
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10 272 In AP, inflammation propagates and promotes tissue destruction via activation of
11
12 273 a cascade of inflammatory cytokines, proteolytic enzymes, and oxygen free radicals.¹⁹

13 274 ²² Neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes are the three main types of white blood
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16 275 cells (WBC). Neutrophils play a key role in the development of local tissue
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18 276 destruction and systemic complications of SAP.²³ Depletion of neutrophils has been
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21 277 associated with an improved prognosis of AP.²³ The percentage of immature
22
23 278 neutrophilic granulocytes might be used clinically as a simple early predictor of an
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25 279 adverse outcome in SAP.²⁴ Additionally, recent studies revealed that the extent of
26
27 280 lymphopenia was associated with disease severity.²⁵⁻²⁷ Lymphopenia has been
28
29 281 reported to have independent prognostic value for some diseases,^{19 26-29} including AP.
30
31 282 Takeyama *et al.* found that impairment of cellular immunity caused by peripheral
32
33 283 lymphocyte apoptosis was linked to the subsequent development of infectious
34
35 284 complications in AP.²⁸ Monocytes produce various cytokines and inflammatory
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37 285 mediators that further amplify inflammatory cell recruitment into the pancreas as well
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39 286 as distant organs such as the lungs.³⁰ Similar to neutrophils, a protective effect was
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41 287 also found by depleting macrophages in a mouse model of AP.³¹ Theoretically, NLR
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43 288 and LMR, which combine two opposing parameters, should be more accurate than
44
45 289 either parameter alone. We found that the NLR had the greatest prognostic value of
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47 290 all the factors we evaluated. It is, however, important to apply the NLR with caution
48
49 291 in clinical settings. Broad-spectrum antibiotics with good tissue penetration, which are
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51 292 essential medicines in the treatment of SAP, can affect WBC by reducing
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53 293 inflammation. Thus, the prognostic value of NLR in AP is uncertain if the effect of
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3 294 antibiotic treatment is not taken into account.³² For this reason, the neutrophil and
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5 295 lymphocyte counts used in this study were from the first complete blood cell count,
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7 296 conducted during the emergency visit. We confirmed that the enrolled patients were
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9 297 untreated at that time; consequently, our results are most likely applicable to untreated
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11 298 patients. Unlike for the NLR, the predictive ability of the LMR was only fair, and was
12
13 299 not independently associated with overall survival in AP.
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16 300 Serum albumin is a negative acute phase response reactant, and reflects the
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18 301 body's nutritional status. Albumin <25 g/L was an independent prognostic factor
19
20 302 related to a poor prognosis of AP.³³ Variation of albumin within 24 h has been
21
22 303 identified as a risk factor for a poor prognosis of critically ill patients in the early
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24 304 stages of SAP.³⁴ The PNI, which includes serum albumin and lymphocyte count, is an
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26 305 independent predictor of poor overall survival in patients with hepatocellular
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28 306 carcinoma.³⁵ To the best of our knowledge, few studies have reported on the
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30 307 application of PNI for predicting mortality of AP, but we found that it was an
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32 308 independent prognostic factor, and was suitable as a confirmed marker.
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36 309 Numerous studies have reported RDW as a strong independent prognostic factor
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38 310 in various diseases and conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, rheumatoid
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40 311 arthritis, cancer, and critical illnesses.^{18 36-38} Our results are consistent with the study
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42 312 by Yao J *et al.*,¹⁸ who reported a significant association between RDW and mortality
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44 313 of patients with AP. Additionally, we found that RDW was most suitable as a reliable
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46 314 excluding marker among the markers we assessed. The mechanisms underlying the
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48 315 association between RDW and mortality in AP remain unclear. The obvious
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50 316 metabolic abnormalities in non-survivors of AP, including inflammation, oxidative
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52 317 stress, poor nutritional status, and persistent organ failure, lead to deregulation of red
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54 318 blood cell homeostasis involving both impaired erythropoiesis and abnormal red
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3 319 blood cell survival.³⁸ RDW reflects these impairments in homeostasis, but only further
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5 320 research can confirm this speculation.
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7 321 The prognostic markers evaluated in this study are direct or combined markers of
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9 322 systemic inflammation that are based on routine, inexpensive, and readily available
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11 323 laboratory tests. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to compare the
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13 324 prognostic value of these markers for predicting mortality in patients with AP
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15 325 simultaneously. Additionally, suitable excluding and identifying markers were found.
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18 326 Some potential limitations of the study should be noted. Although we have taken
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20 327 special care to avoid sources of bias and confounding, some potential bias may still
21
22 328 exist in this retrospective, single-centre study. Information available at the beginning
23
24 329 of the study may have affected the selection of the study participants, although the
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26 330 medical records and laboratory data were collected separately by two people. The
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28 331 reasons for incomplete medical records or why patients were lost to follow-up (n=23)
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30 332 are not known. These patients were excluded from the analyses. As a result, a larger,
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32 333 prospective study is needed to validate the results. Second, only the first set of
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34 334 admission blood results were investigated. As factors change with time, they should
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36 335 be surveyed in the future because of the rapid onset of inflammation. Third, the
37
38 336 typical prediction models, such as APACHE II score, should be included in future
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40 337 research. Fourth, for better validity, +LR should be near 10, and -LR should be 0.2.
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42 338 Unfortunately, no marker examined had perfect +LR and -LR simultaneously.
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44 339 However, these markers are still valuable based on their acceptable AUC. Finally, we
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46 340 only described the association of each of the predictors with mortality of AP; the
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48 341 underlying mechanisms need to be investigated.
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52 342 In conclusion, we found that age, NLR, PNI, CRP, and RDW were independently
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54 343 associated with overall survival of AP. NLR had the best overall performance, RDW
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3 344 was suitable as a reliable marker to exclude death, and PNI was a good predictive
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5 345 marker for death. When applying these markers, any possible influence from therapy
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7 346 should be considered.
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11 348 **Abbreviations**

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14 349 AP, acute pancreatitis; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve;
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16 350 CI, confidence interval; CRP, C-reactive protein; HR, hazard ratio; LMR,
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18 351 lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio; +LR, positive likelihood
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21 352 ratio; MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis;
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23 353 NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; OR, odd ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index;
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25 354 RDW, red cell distribution width; ROC, receiver operating characteristic curve; SAP,
26
27 355 severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count.
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30 357 **Acknowledgments**

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32 358 We thank Edanz Group Ltd. for helping edit the English of the final manuscript.
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37 361 **Contributors**

38
39 362 R.G. and Y.L. designed the experiments. R.G. and Y.L. contributed to the data
40
41 363 collection. Y.Z. conducted the data analysis. Y.L., R.G, and L.F. wrote the manuscript.
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44 364 All authors reviewed the manuscript.
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49 367 **Funding**

50
51 368 This work was financially supported by grants from the Zhejiang Provincial Natural
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53 369 Science Foundation of China (LY15H190002) and the Department of Education
54
55
56 370 Foundation of Zhejiang Province, China (Y201330146).
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3 3694
5 370 **Competing interests**6
7 371 None declared.8
9 37210
11 373 **Patient consent**12
13 374 Obtained.14
15 37516
17 376 **Ethics approval**18
19 377 This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the First Affiliated Hospital of20
21 378 Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China22
23 37924
25 380 **Provenance and peer review**26
27 381 Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.28
29 38230
31 383 **Data sharing statement**32
33 384 No additional data are available.34
35 38536
37 386 **Open access**38
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Table 1 Demographics and laboratory findings in patients with acute pancreatitis

Variables	1. MAP(n=197)	2. MSAP(n=76)	3. SAP(n=86)	p value		
				all groups	1 vs. 2	2 vs. 3
Age (years)	51.43 ± 16.00	48.47 ± 13.28	50.69 ± 14.61	0.352	0.446	1.000
Male (%)	108(54.8%)	41(53.9%)	49(57.0%)	0.919	0.896	0.699
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	52%/12%/11%/25%	51%/16%/13%/20%	47%/15%/14%/24%	0.875	0.664	0.892
WBC (×10 ⁹ /L)	11.5 (3.1–32.0)	14.1 (4.5–36.8)	16.05 (5.9–38.4)	<0.001	<0.001	0.278
Lymphocyte (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.1 (0.2–9.4)	1.0 (0.2–2.6)	0.80 (0.2–2.9)	<0.001	0.004	0.089
Platelet (×10 ⁹ /L)	202 (21–502)	193 (58–548)	163 (27–540)	0.004	0.376	0.046
Albumin (g/L)	38.29 ± 5.07	34.38 ± 6.39	29.99 ± 5.35	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	53.9 (0.7–386)	133.6 (3.2–436.5)	196.1 (27.1–426.7)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13–5191)	222 (27–3845)	581 (16–2377)	0.141	0.083	0.056
RDW (%)	12.8 (11.4–19.2)	13.0 (11.3–16.3)	13.7 (11.7–23.6)	<0.001	0.013	0.014
NLR	8.46 (1.33–55)	14.60 (1.73–60)	19.65 (3.57–53.67)	<0.001	<0.001	0.020
LMR	1.88 (0.28–13.33)	1.03 (0.29–5.33)	1.14 (0.22–6.32)	<0.001	<0.001	0.883
PNI	44.53 ± 6.63	39.36 ± 6.71	34.55 ± 6.02	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Mortality (%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	31(36.0%)	<0.001	–	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean ± SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

1 vs. 2, MAP group vs. MSAP group; 2 vs. 3, MSAP group vs. SAP group.

MAP, mild acute pancreatitis; MSAP, moderately severe acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Table 2 Demographics and laboratory findings in survivors and non-survivors of acute pancreatitis

Variables	Survivors(n=328)	Non-survivors(n=31)	p value
Age (years)	49.84 ± 14.88	58.90 ± 15.60	0.001
Male (%)	179(54.6%)	19(61.3%)	0.472
Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%	50%/13%/12%/25%	58%/19%/10%/13%	0.346
WBC (×10 ⁹ /L)	12.85 (3.1–38.4)	18.5 (6.5–29.3)	0.001
Lymphocytes (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.08 (0.17–9.40)	0.60 (0.30–1.60)	<0.001
Platelet (×10 ⁹ /L)	197 (21–548)	159 (27–376)	0.001
Albumin (g/L)	35.95 ± 6.30	30.44 ± 5.54	<0.001
CRP (mg/L)	98.6 (0.7–436.5)	239.2 (27.1–398.2)	<0.001
Amylase (U/L)	343.5 (13–5191)	909 (16–2377)	0.010
RDW (%)	13 (11.3–19.2)	13.8 (12.6–23.6)	<0.001
NLR	10.47 (1.33–60.0)	25.0 (8.67–53.67)	<0.001
PNI	41.71 ± 7.50	34.00 ± 6.35	<0.001
LMR	1.51 (0.22–13.33)	1.13 (0.24–2.26)	<0.001

Continuous variables are presented as mean ± SD or median (range).

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

Table 3 Odds ratios of prognostic factors for predicting SAP in patients with AP

Factors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value	Odds ratio (95%CI)	p value
NLR (>11.36 vs. ≤11.36)	3.707(2.173-6.326)	<0.001	3.578 (2.082-6.149)	<0.001	1.463(0.711-3.010)	0.301
CRP (>110 vs. ≤110mg/L)	9.867(5.116-19.030)	<0.001	12.609 (6.304-25.218)	<0.001	8.251(3.897-17.468)	<0.001
RDW (>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	3.368(2.003-5.663)	<0.001	3.529 (2.076-5.998)	<0.001	2.533(1.365-4.702)	0.003
PNI (<41.1 vs. ≥41.1)	9.951(5.055-19.589)	<0.001	11.356 (5.665-22.766)	<0.001	7.753(3.400-17.680)	<0.001
LMR (<1.43 vs. ≥1.43)	2.564(1.539-4.271)	<0.001	2.552 (1.524-4.274)	<0.001	0.722(0.355-1.471)	0.370

Model 1: unadjusted model.

Model 2: adjusted for age, gender, and amylase.

Model 3: NLR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR; CRP was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, RDW, PNI, and LMR; RDW was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, CRP, NLR, PNI, and LMR; PNI was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and LMR; LMR was adjusted for age, gender, amylase, NLR, CRP, RDW, and PNI.

AP, acute pancreatitis; SAP, severe acute pancreatitis; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Table 4 Discriminatory ability of inflammation-based markers for predicting mortality in AP patients

Index	AUC(95% CI)	p value ^{&}	Cut-off [#]	Sensitivity	Specificity	+LR	-LR
Training cohort							
NLR	0.804(0.738-0.859)	<0.001	16.64	82.4%	75.6%	3.38	0.23
CRP	0.774(0.706-0.833)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	76.5%	73.8%	2.92	0.32
RDW	0.769(0.700-0.828)	<0.001	13.0%	94.1%	54.3%	2.06	0.11
PNI	0.769(0.701-0.828)	<0.001	33.1	58.8%	88.4%	5.08	0.47
LMR	0.744(0.674-0.806)	<0.001	1.40	82.4%	57.3%	1.93	0.31
Validation cohort							
NLR	0.851(0.790-0.900)	<0.001	16.64	85.7%	73.8%	3.27	0.19
CRP	0.753(0.683-0.815)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	71.4%	65.2%	2.06	0.44
RDW	0.708(0.635-0.773)	0.001	13.0%	85.7%	50.0%	1.71	0.29
PNI	0.791(0.724-0.848)	<0.001	33.1	42.9%	88.4%	3.70	0.65
LMR	0.677(0.603-0.745)	0.015	1.40	78.6%	49.4%	1.55	0.43
Overall							
NLR	0.823(0.780-0.861)	<0.001	16.64	83.9%	74.4%	3.27	0.22
CRP	0.762(0.714-0.805)	<0.001	162.2mg/L	74.2%	69.8%	2.46	0.37
RDW	0.742(0.693-0.786)	<0.001	13.0%	90.3%	49.7%	1.80	0.19
PNI	0.781(0.734-0.822)	<0.001	33.1	51.6%	88.4%	4.46	0.55
LMR	0.710(0.660-0.757)	<0.001	1.40	77.4%	54.0%	1.68	0.42

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; CI, confidence interval; +LR, positive likelihood ratio; -LR, negative likelihood ratio.

[&] The p-value is comparing the AUC with 0.5.

[#] The cut-off values were derived from a training cohort.

Table 5 Prognostic factors of overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis by univariate and multivariate analyses

Factors	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis	
	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value	Hazard ratio (95%CI)	p value
Age (>63 vs. ≤63 years)	5.384(2.653-10.925)	<0.001	4.039(1.873-8.713)	<0.001
Gender (female vs. male)	0.767(0.372-1.579)	0.471		
Amylase (>618 vs. ≤618U/L)	3.544(1.699-7.526)	0.001	2.173(0.965-4.891)	0.061
NLR(>16.64 vs. ≤16.64)	13.130(5.041-34.205)	<0.001	4.726(1.627-13.726)	0.004
CRP(>162.2 vs. ≤162.2mg/L)	6.127(2.740-13.701)	<0.001	3.503(1.534-7.999)	0.003
RDW(>13.0 vs. ≤13.0%)	4.929(2.022-12.017)	<0.001	3.139(1.277-7.714)	0.013
PNI(≤33.1 vs. >33.1)	6.912(3.414-13.991)	<0.001	2.641(1.248-5.590)	0.011
LMR(≤1.40 vs. >1.40)	3.797(1.636-8.813)	0.002	1.036(0.403-2.659)	0.942

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution

width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; CI, confidence interval.

Figure Legends

Fig. 1. ROC curves analysis for predicting mortality by NLR and combined markers in the estimation cohort.

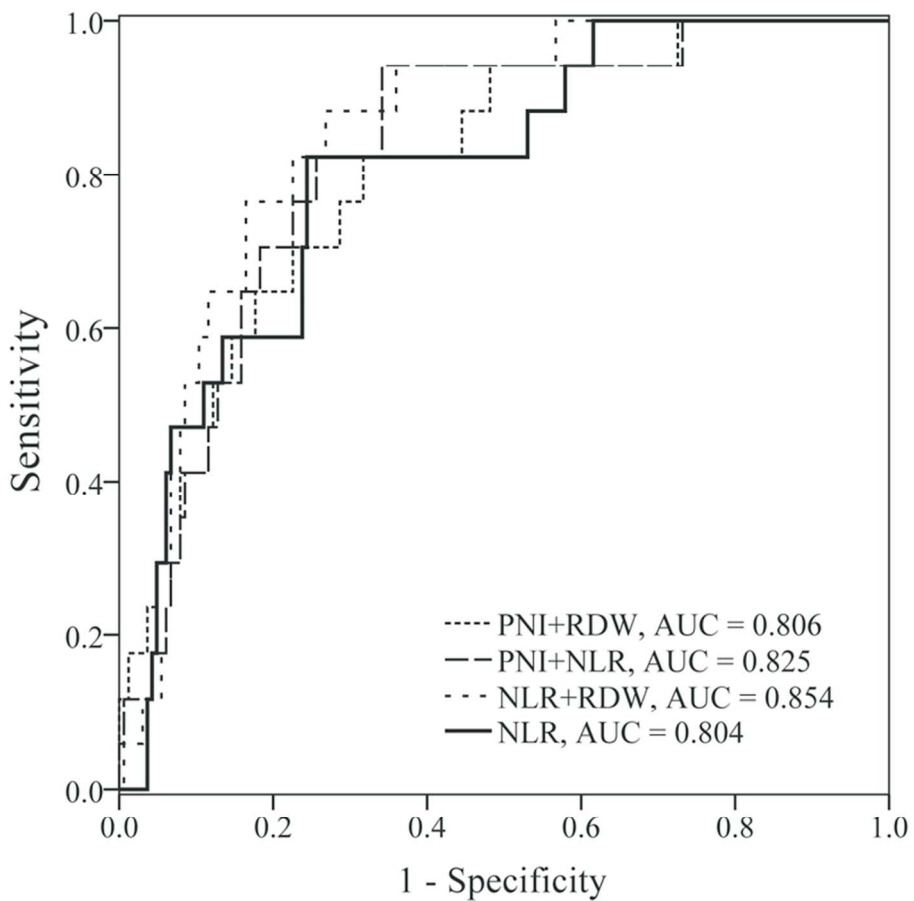
ROC, receiver operating characteristic; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

Fig. 2. Relationship between inflammation-based prognostic markers and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis

A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively.

NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

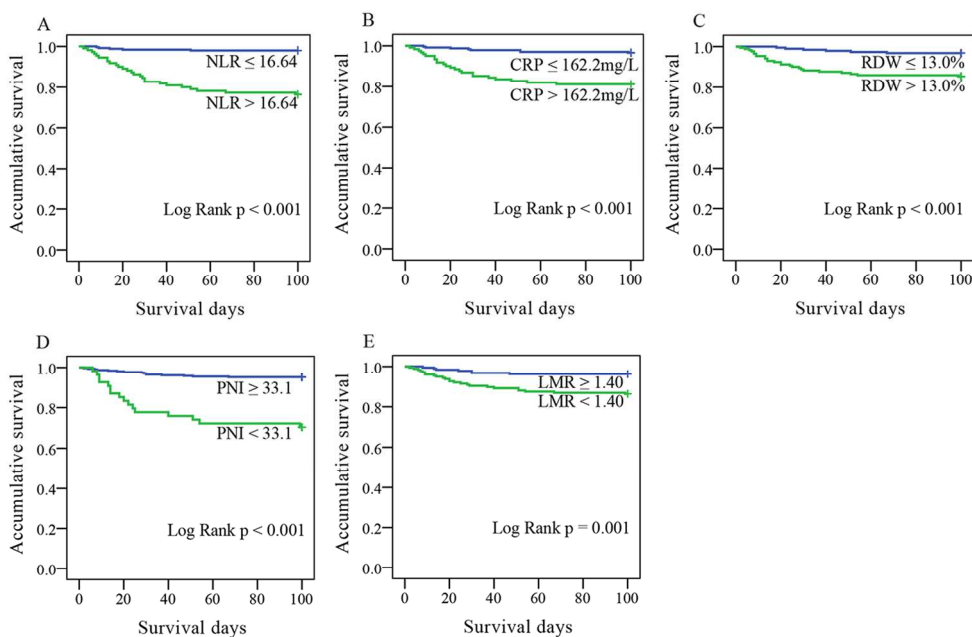
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ROC, receiver operating characteristic; AUC, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

75x72mm (300 x 300 DPI)





A, B, C, D, and E show the relationship between NLR, CRP, RDW, PNI, and LMR, and overall survival in patients with acute pancreatitis, respectively. NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; PNI, prognostic nutritional index; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio.

170x115mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Supplementary Table S1 Demographics and laboratory findings in estimation and validation cohorts

Variable	All patients (n=359)	Training set(n=181)	Validation set(n =178)	p value
Age (years)	50.63 ±15.13	51.66 ± 15.69	49.58 ± 14.51	0.194
Male [N (%)]	198(55.2%)	96(53.0%)	102(57.3%)	0.417
Aetiology (1/2/3/4) %	54.3/9.7/12.0/24.0	55.2/12.7/12.2/19.9	53.4/6.7/11.8/28.1	0.118
WBC (×10 ⁹ /L)	12.9(3.1-38.4)	13.3 (3.1–38.4)	12.9 (4.2–36.8)	0.942
Lymphocytes (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.00 (0.17–9.40)	1.00 (0.20–9.40)	1.00 (0.17–4.80)	0.965
Platelet (×10 ⁹ /L)	192 (21–548)	193 (27–502)	191.5 (21–548)	0.354
Albumin (g/L)	35.47 ±6.42	35.72 ± 6.61	35.22 ± 6.24	0.456
CRP (mg/L)	110 (0.7–436.5)	102.3 (0.8–436.5)	116.85 (0.7–419.4)	0.081
Amylase (U/L)	398 (13–5191)	501 (13–5191)	330 (16–4927)	0.238
RDW (%)	13.0(11.3-23.6)	13.1 (11.3–19.2)	13.0 (11.4–23.6)	0.421
NLR	11.36 (1.33–60.0)	11.50 (1.33–55.0)	11.18 (1.39–60.0)	0.786
PNI	41.05 ±7.72	41.22 ± 7.74	40.87 ± 7.71	0.670
LMR	1.43(0.22–13.33)	1.48 (0.24–13.33)	1.36 (0.22–10.00)	0.367
Mortality [N (%)]	31(8.6%)	17(9.4%)	14(7.9%)	0.607

Continuous variables are presented as mean ±SD or median (range).

p value was training set versus validation set.

Aetiology (1/2/3/4)%, 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent gallstone, alcohol, hypertriglyceridemia, and other aetiologies, respectively.

WBC, white blood cell count; CRP, C-reactive protein; RDW, red cell distribution width; NLR, neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio; LMR, lymphocyte-monocyte ratio; PNI, prognostic nutritional index.

TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

Section/Topic	Item	Checklist Item	Page
Title and abstract			
Title	1	Identify the study as developing and/or validating a multivariable prediction model, the target population, and the outcome to be predicted.	1
Abstract	2	Provide a summary of objectives, study design, setting, participants, sample size, predictors, outcome, statistical analysis, results, and conclusions.	3,4
Introduction			
Background and objectives	3a	Explain the medical context (including whether diagnostic or prognostic) and rationale for developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including references to existing models.	5,6
	3b	Specify the objectives, including whether the study describes the development or validation of the model or both.	6
Methods			
Source of data	4a	Describe the study design or source of data (e.g., randomized trial, cohort, or registry data), separately for the development and validation data sets, if applicable.	6
	4b	Specify the key study dates, including start of accrual; end of accrual; and, if applicable, end of follow-up.	6,7
Participants	5a	Specify key elements of the study setting (e.g., primary care, secondary care, general population) including number and location of centres.	6,7
	5b	Describe eligibility criteria for participants.	6, 7
	5c	Give details of treatments received, if relevant.	Not relevant
Outcome	6a	Clearly define the outcome that is predicted by the prediction model, including how and when assessed.	7
	6b	Report any actions to blind assessment of the outcome to be predicted.	7
Predictors	7a	Clearly define all predictors used in developing or validating the multivariable prediction model, including how and when they were measured.	7,8
	7b	Report any actions to blind assessment of predictors for the outcome and other predictors.	7,8
Sample size	8	Explain how the study size was arrived at.	9
Missing data	9	Describe how missing data were handled (e.g., complete-case analysis, single imputation, multiple imputation) with details of any imputation method.	9
Statistical analysis methods	10a	Describe how predictors were handled in the analyses.	8,9
	10b	Specify type of model, all model-building procedures (including any predictor selection), and method for internal validation.	8,9
	10d	Specify all measures used to assess model performance and, if relevant, to compare multiple models.	8,9
Risk groups	11	Provide details on how risk groups were created, if done.	8,9
Results			
Participants	13a	Describe the flow of participants through the study, including the number of participants with and without the outcome and, if applicable, a summary of the follow-up time. A diagram may be helpful.	9
	13b	Describe the characteristics of the participants (basic demographics, clinical features, available predictors), including the number of participants with missing data for predictors and outcome.	9,10 Table1 and 2
Model development	14a	Specify the number of participants and outcome events in each analysis.	9 Table1 and 2
	14b	If done, report the unadjusted association between each candidate predictor and outcome.	10,11, 12, Table 3 and 5
Model specification	15a	Present the full prediction model to allow predictions for individuals (i.e., all regression coefficients, and model intercept or baseline survival at a given time point).	10,11, Table 3 and 5
	15b	Explain how to use the prediction model.	10,11
Model performance	16	Report performance measures (with CIs) for the prediction model.	10,11, Table3 and 5
Discussion			
Limitations	18	Discuss any limitations of the study (such as nonrepresentative sample, few events per predictor, missing data).	15
Interpretation	19b	Give an overall interpretation of the results, considering objectives, limitations, and results from similar studies, and other relevant evidence.	12-15
Implications	20	Discuss the potential clinical use of the model and implications for future research.	12,13, 15



TRIPOD Checklist: Prediction Model Development

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Other information			
Supplementary information	21	Provide information about the availability of supplementary resources, such as study protocol, Web calculator, and data sets.	Yes
Funding	22	Give the source of funding and the role of the funders for the present study.	16

We recommend using the TRIPOD Checklist in conjunction with the TRIPOD Explanation and Elaboration document.

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