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# Improving detection of early onset neonatal sepsis in preterm infants

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Early onset neonatal sepsis disproportionately affects preterm infants and remains a major cause of morbidity and mortality. Yet, diagnosis remains inadequate resulting in missed cases or prolonged empiric antibiotics with significant adverse consequences including necrotizing enterocolitis, antibiotic resistance, and death. Development of novel, more reliable methods to diagnose sepsis in preterm infants is essential to improve their outcomes. Biomarkers of infection, placental histopathology, and molecular methods of pathogen detection are among the tools being investigated for accurate identification of infants with sepsis. This presentation will review the conundrum of early onset sepsis in preterm infant and discuss both existing evidence and new research on novel diagnostics, including data on acute phase reactants and 16S rRNA PCR of cord blood in a large single-center cohort.

## Biography

Leena Bhattacharya Mithal is a Pediatric Infectious Diseases specialist at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and an Instructor at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine. She is pursuing her Master Degree in Clinical Investigation at the Northwestern Graduate School. Her research interests include neonatal infections, novel diagnostics for sepsis in preterm infants, study of the perinatal-neonatal microbiome, and vaccine awareness and delivery.

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