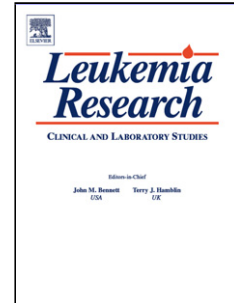


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It is not just the number of metaphases that matters

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To the editor,

We read with great interest the study of Swart *et al.* [1] entitled “ Prognostic impact of a suboptimal number of analyzed metaphases in normal karyotype lower –risk MDS” recently published and we would like to like to discuss three important ideas regarding these results: 1) It is not just the number of metaphases that matters ; 2) Sequential Karyotype also adds information; 3) FISH really adds information but does not substitute G-Banding.

In a total of 2196 low risk MDS cases, Swart *et al* detected 774 (39%) patients with abnormal karyotype and 35% had less than 20 metaphases analyzed [1]. It is common a low mitotic index when performing G-Banding from MDS samples due to two main reasons: Low proliferative capacity of abnormal clones and cases with Hypocellular MDS.

Besides the number of metaphases, the quality also matters. Each chromosome consists of a continuous series of bands with no unbanded areas. Band is a part of chromosome distinguishable from adjacent parts by its darker or lighter staining

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