

Abstract

Platelet parameters were determined in 600 full term healthy Zimbabwean neonates using a Coulter Counter Model S Plus. The mean +/- s.d. values obtained with ranges were: Platelet count 235 +/- 67 (range 100-410) x 10⁹ l⁻¹; Mean Platelet Volume (MPV) 9.5 +/- 1.0 (range 7.1-13.9) fl; Plateletcrit (PCT) 0.269 +/- 0.058 (range 0.142-0.524) and Platelet Distribution Width (PDW) 16.8 +/- 1.0 (range 12.2-19.8). Although platelet counts in this study were comparable to those established by others in both Black and Caucasian infants, the female Zimbabwean neonates had significantly higher counts than the males ($p < 0.001$). An inverse relationship between the number of circulating platelets and their MPV was also observed. Further studies are needed to delineate the range of normality of these platelet measurements in the African neonate so that abnormal cases can be adequately screened, investigated and appropriately treated.