Abstract:

Bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) is a safe, simple and inexpensive technique that can be performed in the field without sophisticated equipment or advanced skill. Bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) is indicated for the diagnostic evaluation of small airway disease and alveolar disease, and can sometimes prove useful in the diagnosis of interstitial lung disease. The samples produced by BAL are quite different from samples produced by tracheal lavage, coming from the deeper areas of lung and distal airways. BAL fluid cytology has better correlation with pulmonary histopathology than tracheal fluid. But the latter fluid is the preferred sample to determine the bacterial cause for bronchopneumonia. Brush cytology can provide supplementary information to BAL, like for example detection of Bordetella on the surface of ciliated cells.