Objective: The aim of this study was to evaluate the influence of Saccharomyces boulardii on the intestinal permeability, laboratory parameters and MELD and Child-Pugh severity scores in cirrhotic patients eligible for liver transplantation. Methods: Eighteen patients followed in a Transplant Outpatient Clinic were evaluated immediately before the beginning of treatment, after a 30-day period of treatment period with probiotics and at the end of the second study month (after a thirty-day period without probiotics). Fifteen healthy controls also underwent the intestinal permeability test (lactulose/mannitol). Results: Before the probiotic, the median lactulose/ mannitol ratio was greater in the cirrhotic patients (0.0209, range 0.0012-0.1984) compared to the healthy controls (0.0030, range 0.0020-0.0013) (p < 0.05). Eight of fifteen patients, half of whom had ascites, showed increased intestinal permeability above the higher value observed in the controls. No significant association was found between the severity scores for liver disease, age, presence of ascites and intestinal permeability immediately before the beginning of study. After treatment with S. boulardii, there was no improvement in intestinal permeability or significant differences in the laboratory parameters for the three evaluations. Conclusions: Patients eligible for liver transplants presented with increased intestinal permeability compared to healthy controls. A thirty-day treatment with S.

Keywords
Cirrhosis, Intestinal permeability, Probiotic,
Severity scores.