A 47-year-old male is admitted with epigastric pain and vomiting for 24 hours. On abdominal exam, there is epigastric tenderness without rebound/guarding. Vitals show temperature of 100.4 F, heart rate 118, blood pressure 108/74, respiratory rate 16. Labs show white blood cell count 15,000, creatinine 1.4, BUN 42, AST 86, ALT, 42, alkaline phosphatase 122, total bilirubin 1.2. Right upper quadrant ultrasound shows hepatic steatosis, normal appearing gallbladder and common bile duct 6 mm. IV fluids and pain medications are started.

What is the best choice for fluids in this patient?

A. Normal saline at 150 mL/hr
B. Lactated Ringers at 150 mL/hr
C. Normal saline at 300 mL/hr
D. Lactated Ringers at 300 mL/hr

Answer: D

Goals of treatment with IV fluids in acute pancreatitis include decreasing the hematocrit and BUN within the first 24 hours of admission with early aggressive fluid resuscitation at 250-500 mL per hours of isotonic crystalloid in the first 12-24 hours. Lactated Ringer’s is the preferred resuscitation fluid of choice.