

Clinical Guideline

Abdominal Ultrasonography

By Dr. CJ Tseng

Consultations: If abnormalities are noted at pelvic ultrasonography, an obstetrician and gynecologist or radiologist can be consulted for further evaluation. Color flow Doppler imaging may be helpful in certain cases (eg, ovarian torsion), and a repeat ultrasonographic examination may be necessary.

Further Outpatient Care:

- Perform further outpatient evaluation and repeat pelvic ultrasonography in cases of ovarian cysts.

Patient Education:

- Inform patients that the ultrasonographic examination performed by the emergency physician is for screening of potential life-threatening situations and/or difficult diagnoses.
- If an abnormal ultrasonographic finding is noted, subsequent ultrasonographic examination may be needed for detailed diagnosis.

Medical/Legal Pitfalls:

- The biggest pitfall of using ultrasonography in the ED is missing a diagnosis of an ectopic pregnancy. An interstitial pregnancy can be confused with an intrauterine pregnancy.
- Diagnosis of a carcinoma is beyond the present scope of practice for the emergency sonographer. It is sufficient to say that a complex mass is present in a particular anatomical location.
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Abdominal ultrasonography is the most cost-effective and least invasive method to confirm or exclude the presence of ascites and is therefore considered the gold standard in the diagnosis of ascites. It can detect amounts as small as 100 mL²⁶ and even as small as 1 mL to 2 mL when the Morison pouch and the pelvic cul-de-sac are scanned.²⁷ Abdominal ultrasonography More recently, abdominal radiography and abdominal ultrasonography have become more useful in evaluating horses with abdominal pain. Several recent studies have shown that abdominal ultrasonography in the colic patient can be a very useful diagnostic tool. Technique. Abdominal ultrasonography is a very safe and non-invasive diagnostic test. After initial examination of a horse with signs of abdominal pain, the baseline pain level should be considered. Abdominal ultrasonography (also called abdominal ultrasound imaging or abdominal sonography) is a form of medical ultrasonography (medical application of ultrasound technology) to visualise abdominal anatomical structures. It uses transmission and reflection of ultrasound waves to visualise internal organs through the abdominal wall (with the help of gel which helps transmission of the sound waves). For this reason, the procedure is also called a transabdominal ultrasound, in contrast with endoscopic