

2025 SDMS Annual Conference

Predictive Value of MCA Doppler— A Lifetime of Clinical Utility

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Community Regional Medical Center



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Stephen (Steve) McLaughlin



THANK YOU TO DR. KEVIN EVANS FOR
PROVIDING IMAGES AND CONTENT



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Stephen (Steve) McLaughlin

- Steve McLaughlin, BS, RT(R), RDMS, FSDMS
- SDMS President (1999-2001)
- Lead with focus on listening, empathy, persuasion, forward thinking, and especially growth of people
- When Steve was President he was diagnosed with brain cancer

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Stephen (Steve) McLaughlin

- Steve lead with both humor and strength
- Kevin Evans described Steve's dislike for email and told Kevin that he was trying to read one of his lengthy emails and his wife found him blacked out
- He said "can you shorten those up a bit ?" It was clearly due to Kevin's emails and NOT his cancer

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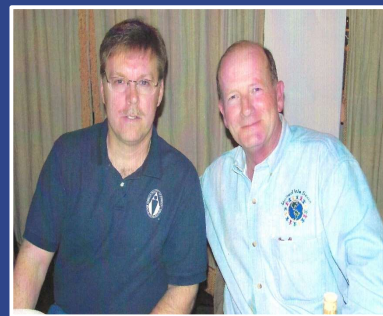
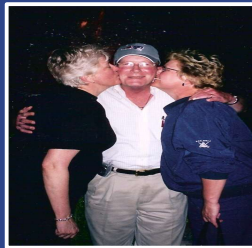
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Major Accomplishments

- Steve persuaded the US Bureau of Labor Statistics to reclassify sonographers and upgrade our Labor outlook handbook
- Steve felt that sonographers should have a unified voice and believed in sonographers meeting in person at the annual conference to learn from each other and network. He came up with the slogan “United We Scan”

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Thank you Steve – “Forever in our Hearts”

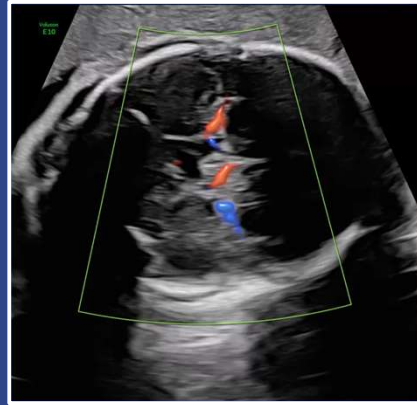


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OBJECTIVES

- Describe clinical utility of MCA Doppler from Fetus to Adult
- Provide examples of versatility of MCA Doppler across multiple diseases
- Provide case examples utilizing MCA Doppler assessment



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FETAL ASSESSMENT



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FETAL ANEMIA

- Fetal anemia is a serious condition that occurs when a fetus has an inadequate number or quality of red blood cells
- Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and cells, so fetal anemia can have serious consequences for the fetus and pregnancy

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FETAL ANEMIA ETIOLOGY

- Alloimmunisation (antibodies) occurs when the mother creates antibodies against the blood of the fetus
- Non-immune anemia can be caused by infections, transfusion between twins, heart problems, or other causes

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IFT- INTRAUTERINE FETAL TRANSFUSION

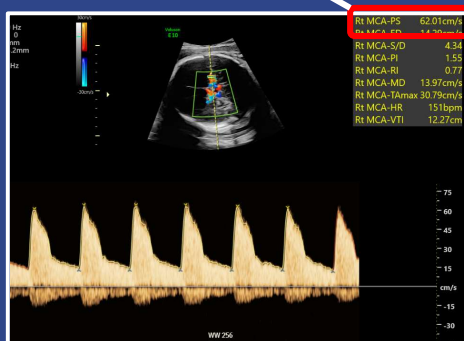
- Ultrasound guided procedure to draw blood from the fetal umbilical vein to determine type of anemia, blood type, and HCT
- If serious fetal anemia is found, Intrauterine fetal transfusion will be performed.

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FETAL ANEMIA

Rt MCA-PS 62.01cm/s

NORMAL MCA



perinatology.com
Expected Peak Velocity of Systolic Blood Flow in the Middle Cerebral Artery (MCA) as a Function of Gestational Age

Home > Calculators > MCA Peak Systolic Velocity

Enter
Gestational age weeks days
Observed MCA peak systolic velocity cm/sec

Calculations
The Median Peak Systolic Velocity for this age is
Your measurement is Multiples of Median

The risk of anemia is highest in fetuses with a pre-transfusion peak systolic velocity of 1.5 times the median or higher.

Formula: $MCA-PSV = e^{(0.31 + 0.006 GA)}$, where MCA-PSV is the peak systolic velocity in the middle cerebral artery and GA is gestational age

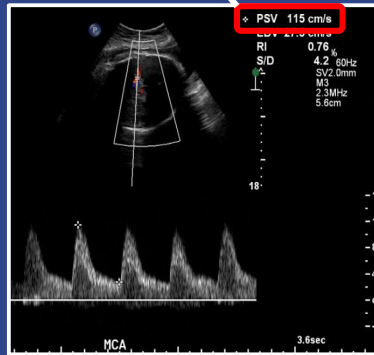
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HOW TO RECORD RESULTS FOR FETAL ANEMIA

✦ PSV 115 cm/s

FETAL ANEMIA



perinatology.com
Expected Peak Velocity of Systolic Blood Flow in the Middle Cerebral Artery (MCA) as a Function of Gestational Age

Home » Calculators » MCA Peak Systolic Velocity

Enter
Gestational age: 26 weeks 0 days
Observed MCA peak systolic velocity: 115 cm/sec

Calculate Reset

Calculations
The Median Peak Systolic Velocity for this age is 33.6
Your measurement is 3.423 Multiples of Median

The risk of anemia is highest in fetuses with a pre-transfusion peak systolic velocity of 1.5 times the median or higher.

Formula: $MCA-PSV = e^{(2.31 + 0.045 GA)}$, where MCA-PSV is the peak systolic velocity in the middle cerebral artery and GA is gestational age

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ASSESSMENT OF INTRAUTERINE GROWTH RESTRICTION

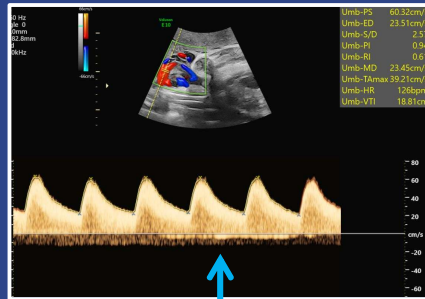
- Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), is a condition that occurs when a fetus doesn't grow at a normal rate during pregnancy
- The fetus may not be getting enough nutrients and oxygen for growth and development. This can be due to a problem with the placenta, or an infection
- Early-onset IUGR can also be caused by chromosomal abnormalities

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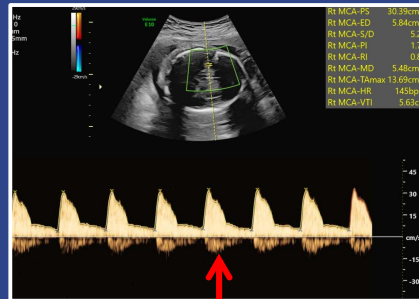
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UMBILICAL ARTERY PI/MCA PI RATIO

Normal umbilical artery PI/MCA PI ratio is < 1



NORMAL LOW RESISTIVE FLOW
IN UMBILICAL ARTERY



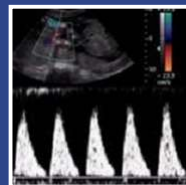
NORMAL HIGH RESISTIVE FLOW
IN FETAL MCA

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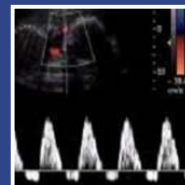
VASCULAR ASSESSMENT



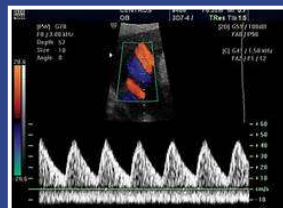
NORMAL UMB ART



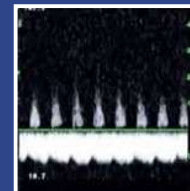
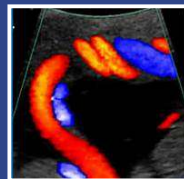
ABSENT DIASTOLIC
FLOW



REVERSED D FLOW



NORMAL UMB VEIN

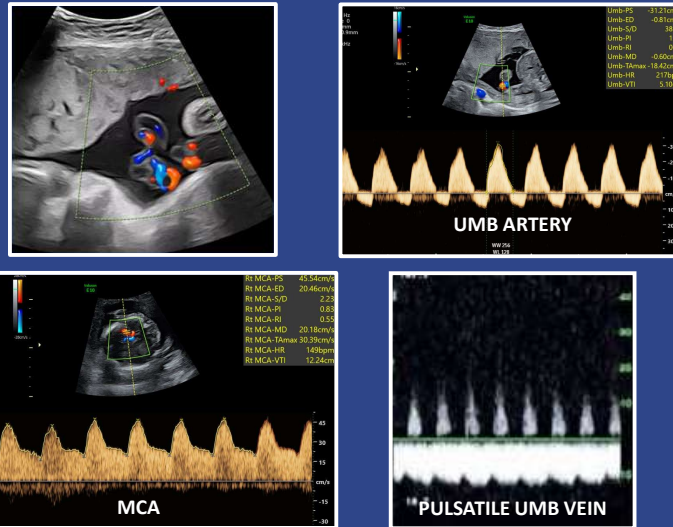


PULSATILE UMB VEIN

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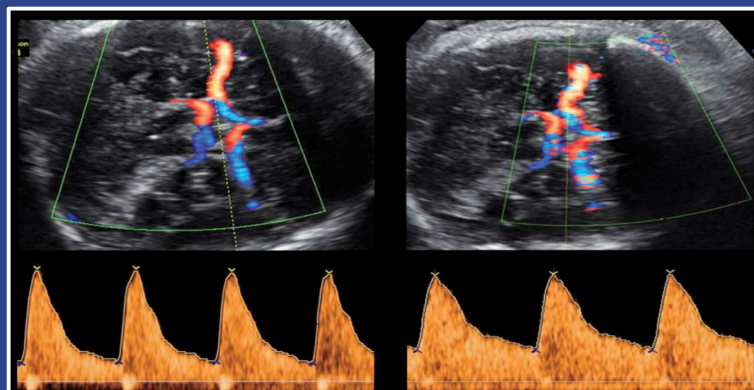
ASSESSMENT OF INTRAUTERINE GROWTH RESTRICTION



BRAIN SPARING IUGR (ASYMMETRICAL)

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ASSESSMENT OF INTRAUTERINE GROWTH RESTRICTION



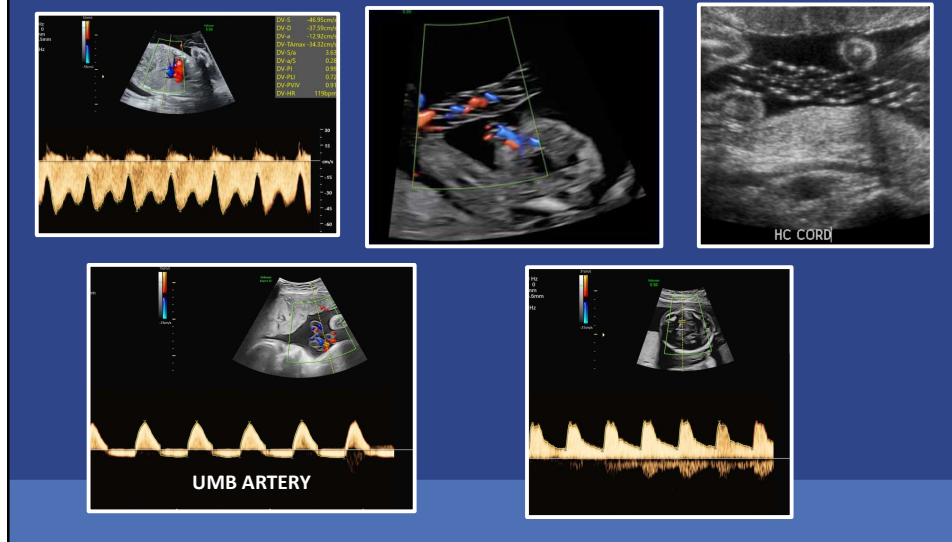
FETAL MCA - BRAIN SPARING IUGR

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ASSESSMENT OF INTRAUTERINE GROWTH RESTRICTION

PLACENTAL INSUFFICIENCY/ HYPERCOILED CORD



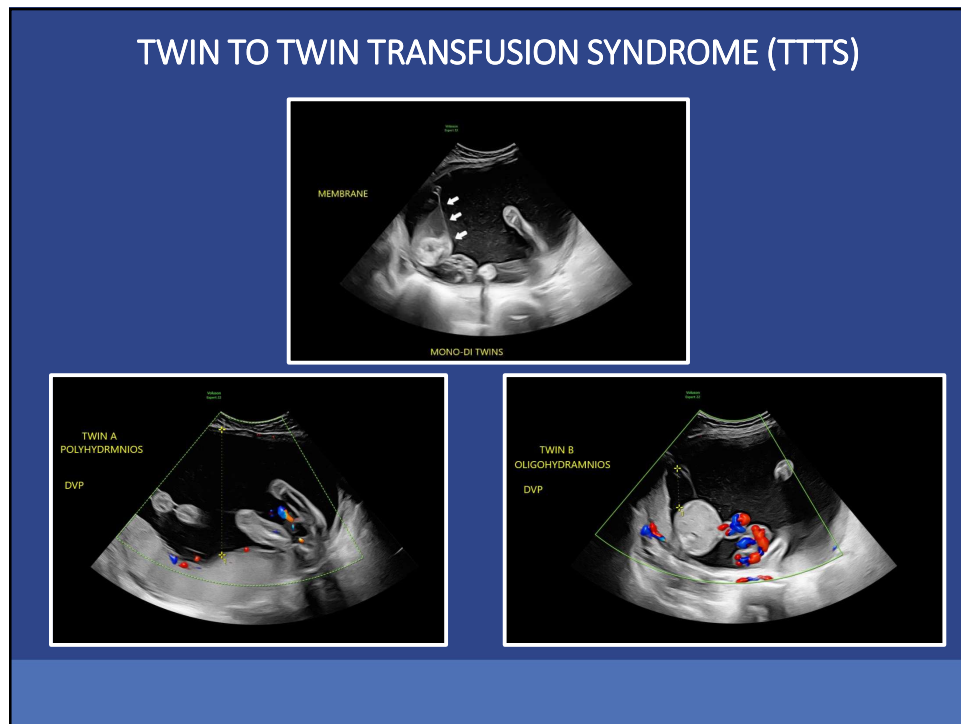
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COMPLICATIONS OF MONO-DI TWINS

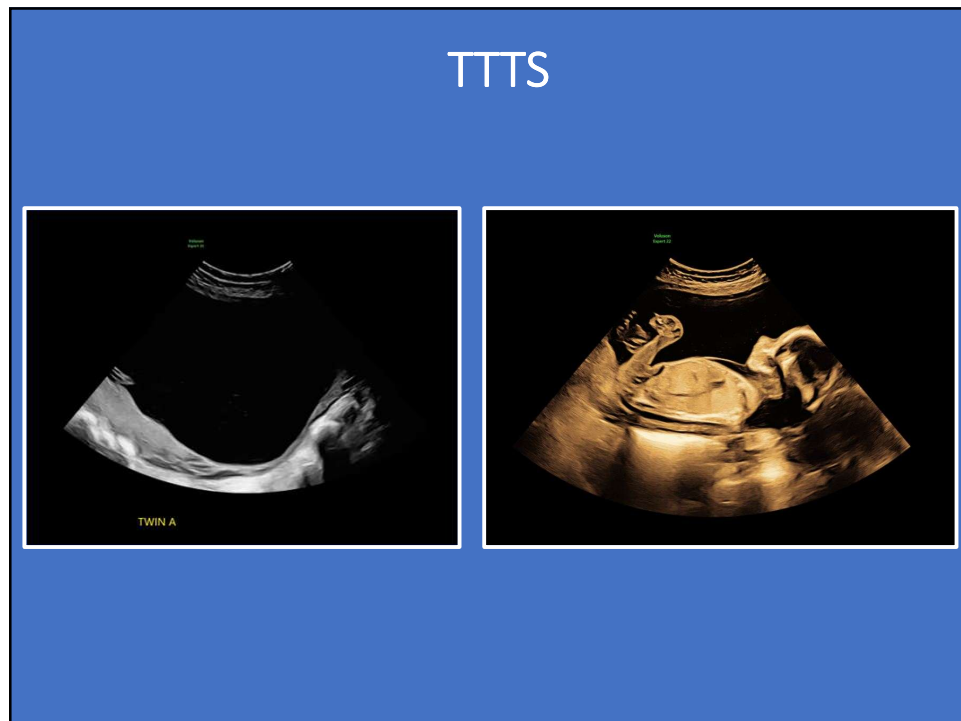
- Monochorionic/ Diamniotic Twins
- TTTS (Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome)
- Twin Anemia/Polycythemia Syndrome
- Donor Twin (Anemia) Increased PSV Fetal MCA
- Recipient Twin (Polycythemia) Decreased PSV

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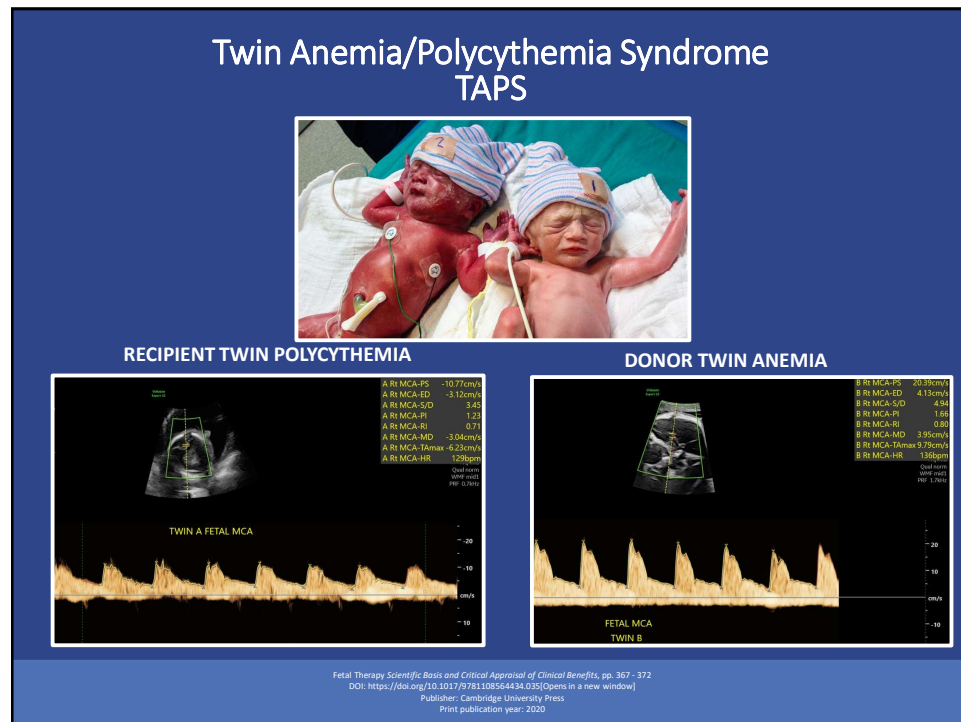


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HYPOXIC ISCHEMIC ENCEPHALOPATHY

Hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy (HIE) is an umbrella term for a brain injury that happens before, during, or shortly after birth when oxygen or blood flow to the brain is reduced or stopped.

HYPOXIA= Lack of Oxygen **ISCHEMIA** = Lack of perfusion **ENCEPHALOPATHY**= Decreased brain function

Placental abruption

Uterine Rupture

Fetal bradycardia

Cord knot or prolapse

Birth trauma

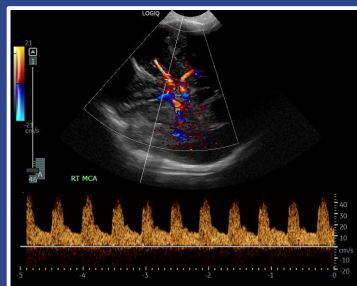
Maternal Hypoxia or demise

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HIE DOPPLER ANALYSIS



Photo courtesy of Thermakid

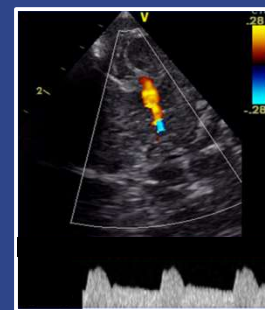


NORMAL MCA DOPPLER

Birth to 6 hours
→

←
Cooling Therapy

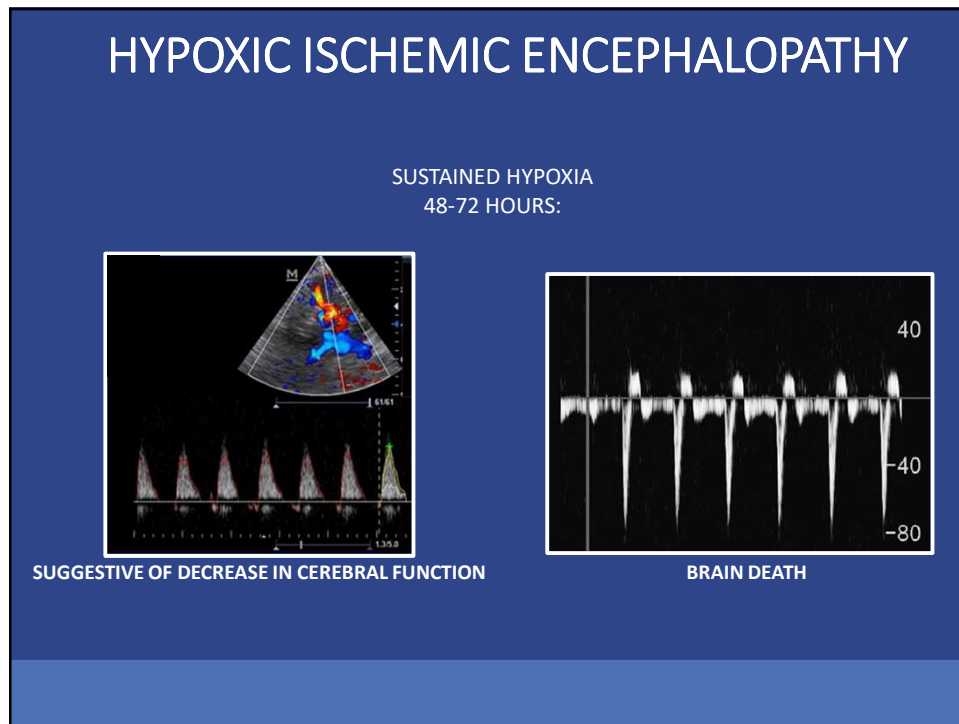
- Decrease body temp to < 91.0 degrees F
- Start before 6 hours after birth
- Lasts 72 hours only
- Decreases metabolic rate
- Preserves brain function



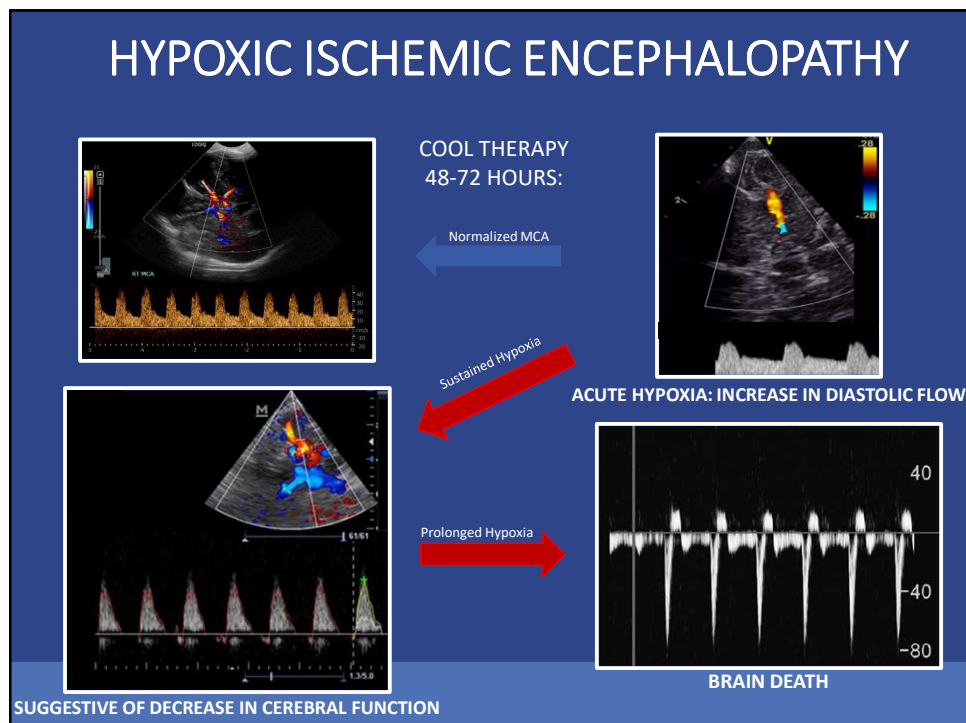
ACUTE HYPOXIA:
INCREASE IN DIASTOLIC FLOW

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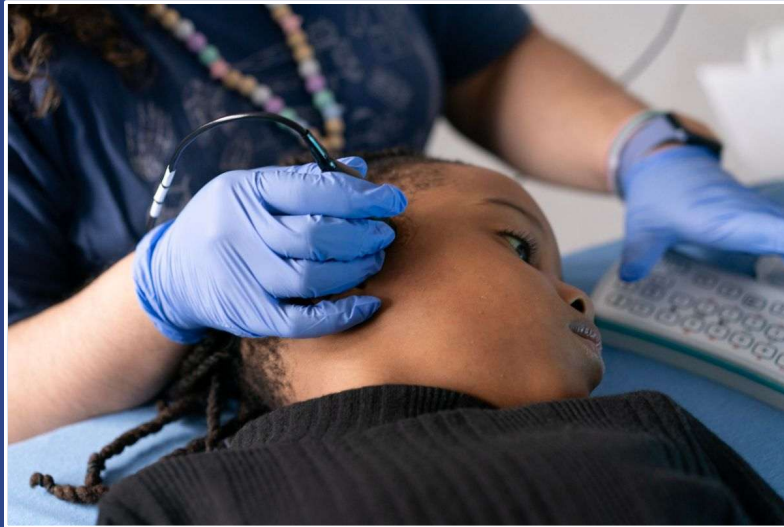
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PEDIATRICS



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SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

- Sickle cell anemia is a blood disorder that affects the shape of red blood cells, which carry oxygen throughout the body
- It's caused by an inherited gene that produces an abnormal form of hemoglobin
- Transcranial Doppler (TCD) monitors the risk of stroke in children with sickle cell disease

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SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

- SCD causes red blood cells to become rigid and irregularly shaped (sickle) which can block blood vessels and increase the risk of stroke
- TCD is utilized to determine if there is increased velocities within the intracranial vessels

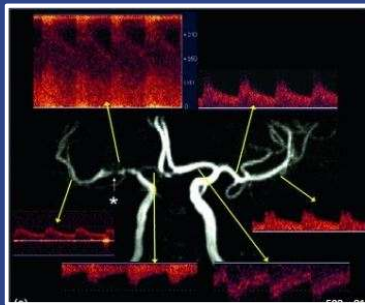


https://theconversation.com/theres-no-cure-for-sickle-cell-disease-but-spotting-it-early-can-improve-treatment-185784?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=bylinecopy_url_button

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SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

- Typically the children are screened annually unless increased velocities are noted
- If elevated velocities are detected, the child will require further monitoring or transfusion intervention



Topcuoglu, Mehmet. (2012). Transcranial Doppler ultrasound in neurovascular diseases: Diagnostic and therapeutic aspects. *Journal of neurochemistry*. 123 Suppl 2. 99-101. 10.1111/j.1471-4159.2012.07942.x.

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ADULTS



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TCD ASSESSMENT FOR VASOSPASM SECONDARY TO SUBARACHNOID HEMORRHAGE

- Transcranial Doppler (TCD) ultrasound is a non-invasive test that can be used to detect and monitor cerebral vasospasm

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VASOSPASM

- Serious complication after subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH)
- Significant cause of morbidity and mortality
- Most common cause of SAH is leakage from intracranial cerebral aneurysms into subarachnoid space
- Common sites for aneurysms are the ACoA, MCA, and PCoA

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VASOSPASM AFTER SAH

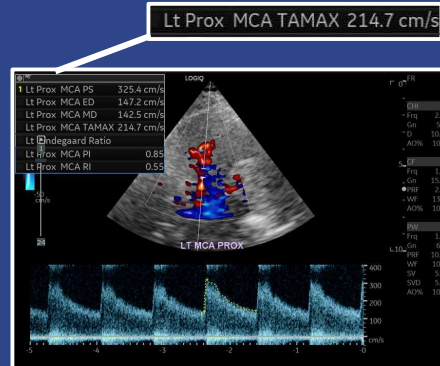
- Increased blood flow velocity and pressure drop distal to the narrowed segment
- Unusual in the first 2-3 days after SAH
- Do early baseline study
- TCD should be performed daily or every other day for two weeks, and the highest velocity obtained from each artery should be recorded
- Complete exam not always possible

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VASOSPASM AFTER SAH

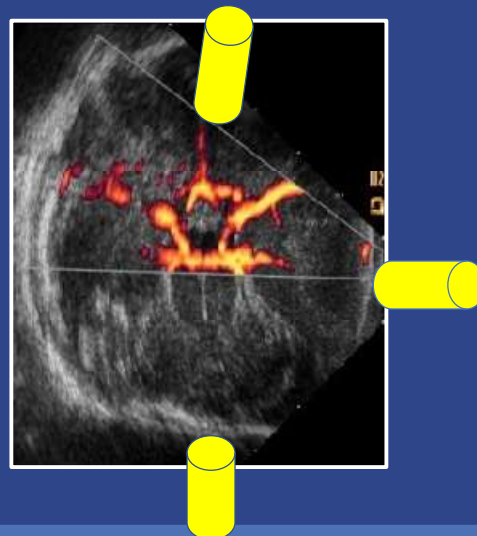
- MCA/ICA ratio should be obtained (Lindegard ratio)
- PCO₂, Hct, and BP should also be recorded
- Time and date of exam should be documented
- Velocity increases begin to occur about day 3
- Reaches maximum between days 7-12
- Generally resolve at 2-3 weeks



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TECHNIQUE (IMAGING WINDOWS)

- Transtemporal
- Transoccipital
- Transorbital
- Submandibular



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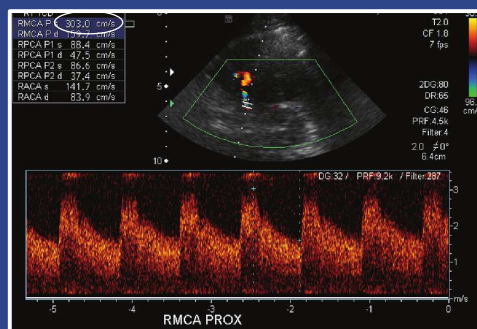
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INTRACRANIAL ARTERIAL ANATOMY

- Internal carotid artery
- Ophthalmic artery
- Middle cerebral artery
- Anterior cerebral artery
- Vertebral artery
- Posterior cerebral artery
- Basilar artery
- Circle of Willis

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TCD ASSESSMENT FOR VASOSPASM SECONDARY TO SUBARACHNOID HEMORRHAGE



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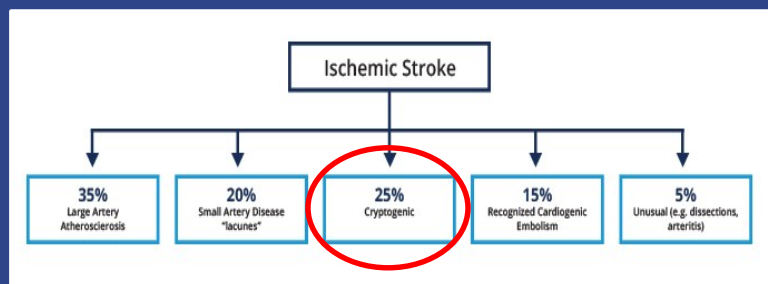
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LIMITED TCD

- TCD with bubble to evaluate for right to left shunt at foramen ovale
- Determine possible cause of Cryptogenic stroke

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SUBCLASSIFICATION OF ISCHEMIC STROKE



Benjamin, EJ et al Circulation 2019;139:e1-e143

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WHAT IS CRYPTOGENIC STROKE?

- Despite extensive investigation, a brain infarction is NOT clearly attributable to typical types of ischemic stroke

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MICROEMBOLI IN PATIENTS WITH CRYPTOGENIC STROKE

- Microemboli can be a cause of cryptogenic stroke
- Cryptogenic stroke may be caused by venous thromboembolism in patients with a patent foramen ovale

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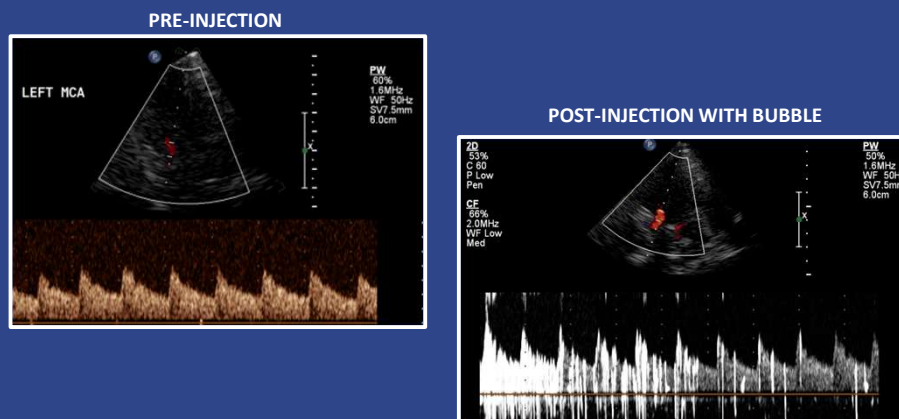
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WHO IS AT RISK?

- 25-40% of all ischemic strokes are cryptogenic
- PFO, pulmonary arterial AVMs, unstable carotid plaque, atrial fibrillation.
- All ages
- Less common in HTN
- Smoking not associated

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POSITIVE BUBBLE STUDY



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TCD INTERPRETATION

- **GRADE 0:** No micro emboli detected
- **GRADE I:** 1-10 micro emboli
- **GRADE II:** 11-30 micro emboli
- **GRADE III:** 31-100 micro emboli
- **GRADE IV:** 101-300 micro emboli
- **GRADE V:** > 300 micro emboli

Spencer, MP et al. *Journal of Neuroimaging* 2004;14:342-349

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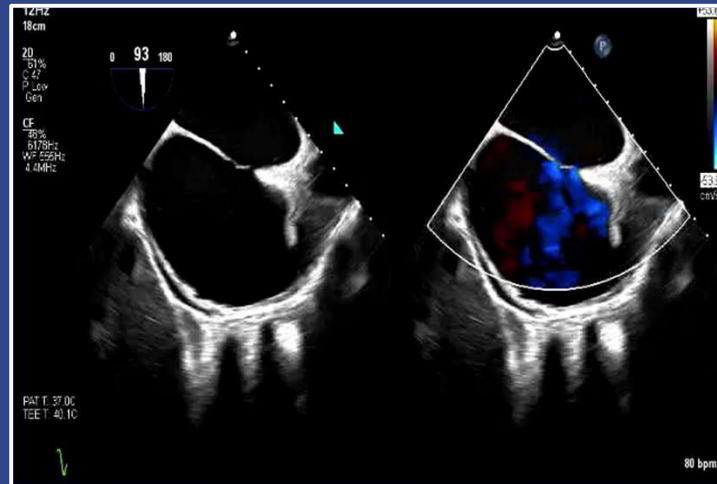
CASE STUDY

- 56 y.o. male with recent cryptogenic stroke
- Fit, athletic, no prior neurologic symptoms
- Recent bronchitis x1 week
- Multiple coughing spells

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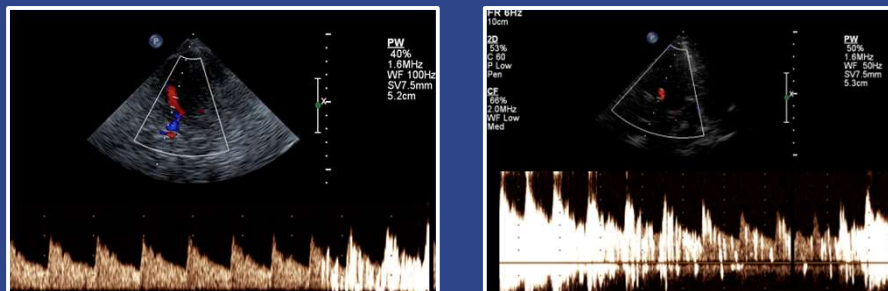
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CASE STUDY - IMAGES



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TCD



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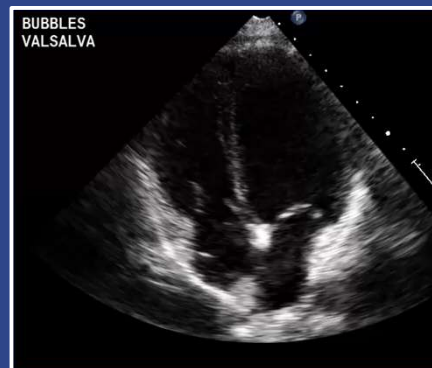
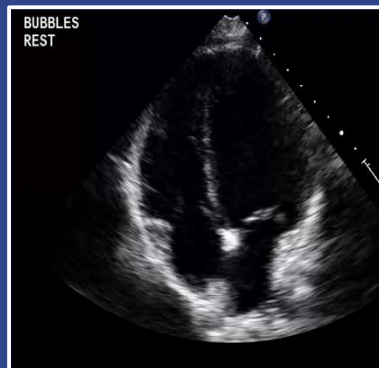
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CASE STUDY #2

- 23 y/o female with h/o frequent migraines and visual disturbances
- Seen and followed at another regional hospital for past three years. Treated medically for migraines
- Previous TTE, Carotid US and CT head was negative
- Presented to our ER with migraine and partial blindness in right eye
- Echo with bubble was ordered

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ECHO PERFORMED WITH BUBBLE STUDY



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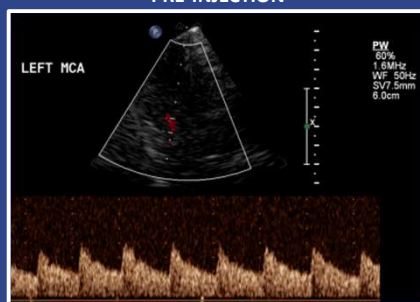
TEE - PFO



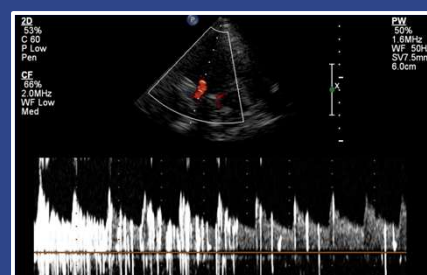
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POSITIVE BUBBLE STUDY

PRE-INJECTION



POST-INJECTION WITH BUBBLE



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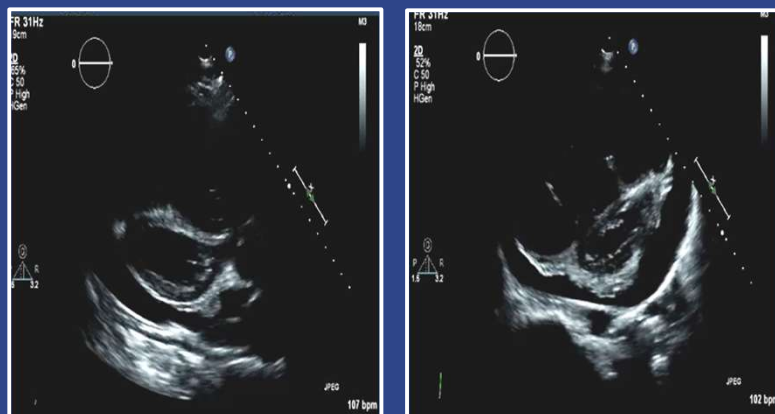
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CASE STUDY #3

- 35-year-old female presented to ER for shortness of breath, leg swelling, palpitations and right sided weakness
- No prior studies or records were available at time of the echocardiogram other than a chest x-ray reporting cardiomegaly

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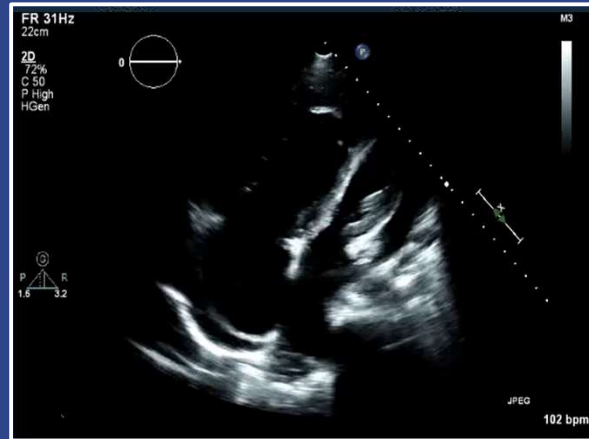
CASE STUDY #3



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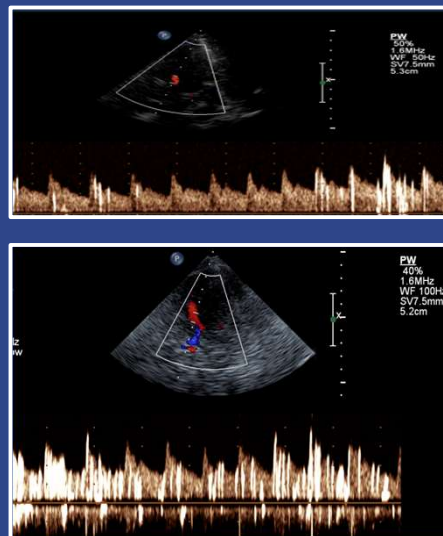
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CASE STUDY #3



APICAL 4 CHAMBER

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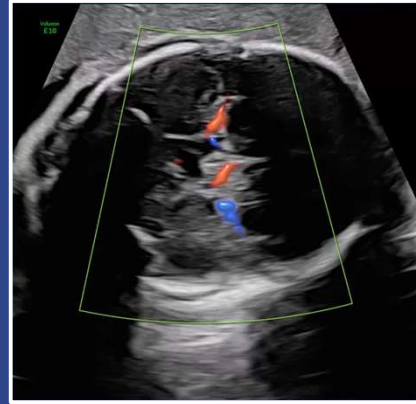


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CONCLUSION

- Described clinical utility of MCA Doppler from Fetus to Adult
- Provided examples of versatility of MCA Doppler across multiple diseases
- Provided case examples utilizing MCA Doppler assessment



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REFERENCES

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**THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!**

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