A Study on Accuracy of Ultrasound Imaging in Diagnosing Adnexal Masses Presenting with Acute Symptoms by Clinicopathological Correlation

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Abstract
Transvaginal ultrasound imaging aids as a noninvasive modality to diagnose most of the adnexal pathologies presenting with acute abdomen. An observational study is done to determine the accuracy of ultrasound imaging in the evaluation and characterization of adnexal masses presenting as acute abdomen by correlating the results with histopathological diagnosis. Of the total of 67 patients in the study population, 28 patients presented with acute abdomen. The ultrasound imaging was diagnostic in 7 (25%) cases and contributory to diagnosis in 21(75%) cases.

Background: Abdominal pain is one of the most common presentations of adnexal pathology in gynecology. Early diagnosis and intervention is necessary in adolescent girls and reproductive age group women to conserve reproductive function.

Aim: This study is done to determine the accuracy of ultrasound imaging in the evaluation and characterization of adnexal masses presenting as acute abdomen by correlating the results with histopathological diagnosis. Transvaginal Ultrasound imaging aids as a noninvasive modality to diagnose most of the adnexal pathologies presenting with acute abdominal pain.

Keywords: Adnexal, acute, torsion, hemorrhage, Rupture, diagnostic, contributory.

Introduction
Abdominal pain is one of the most common presentations of adnexal pathology in gynecology. Other than the life threatening early pregnancy related complication -ruptured ectopic, common causes of acute abdominal pain are torsion and hemorrhage which are the complications of adnexal masses². Early diagnosis and intervention is necessary in adolescent girls and in reproductive age group women to conserve reproductive function.
Materials and Methods

Study Design: Observational-cross sectional study

Source of Data: Patients referred to the Department of radio diagnosis with acute abdominal pain and clinical suspicion of adnexal pathology for ultrasound examination.

Study Period: January 2017 to October 2018

Study Population: 67 patients referred to the department of radio diagnosis with clinically suspected adnexal masses during the study period. 28 patients out of 67 presented with acute abdominal pain.

Methodology

- Detailed history taking
- Explaining the details of the procedure to the patient.
- A structured proforma used to enter the patient details, clinical history, Clinical examination findings and relevant investigations.
- Ultrasound examination of the pelvic organs performed on high-end ultrasound and Doppler machine-Siemens Accuson Antares. Convex probe (2 – 6 MHz), Linear Probe (7.5-12 MHz), Transvaginal probe (4 -9 MHz)
- Transabdominal examination
- Transvaginal examination
- Doppler study-colour Doppler, power Doppler, spectral Doppler
- Lesions are reported based on specific ultrasound characteristics\(^{[15]}\). Results are analysed and compared with clinico-pathological findings to estimate the accuracy of ultrasound imaging in diagnosing adnexal pathologies.

Results

Of the total of 67 patients in the study population, 28 patients presented with acute abdomen. Most common cause of acute abdomen in the study population was found to be ruptured ectopic-19(67.8%) followed by Serous cystadenoma - complicated by torsion, rupture- 4 cases (14%) and Dermoid cyst-complicated by torsion-2 in number (7%).

Conclusion

Other than the life threatening early pregnancy related complication -ruptured ectopic, complications of adnexal masses such as torsion, hemorrhage, rupture are the common causes of acute abdominal pain due to adnexal pathology, in this study.

The ultrasound imaging was diagnostic in 7 (25%) cases and contributory in 21(75%) cases.

Acute abdominal conditions due to adnexal pathologies in the study population can be grouped into those associated with pregnancy and others.

- **Associated with pregnancy**
  - Ruptured ectopic gestation-19
  - Torsion Dermoid cyst-1
  - Ruptured serous cystadenoma -1

- **Others**
  - Torsion serous cystadenoma-3
  - Torsion Dermoid cyst-1
  - Torsion of normal ovary-1
  - Ruptured Endometrioma-1
  - Ruptured hemorrhagic cyst -1

Ruptured ectopic gestation

In 21 patients with proven ectopic pregnancy, 19 cases presented as acute abdomen, ultrasound imaging contributed to diagnosis in 17 cases (89.4%) and could diagnose two cases (10.5%) which is comparable to other studies.

The diagnosis of ectopic gestation required clinical and biochemical correlation in addition to specific ultrasound findings. Ultrasonography could rule out an intrauterine pregnancy in all the patients. However, the demonstration of a viable extra-uterine pregnancy was not possible in most patients. Using a combination of criteria viz., a complex adnexal mass adjacent to an enlarged empty uterus, pseudo-gestational sac with echogenic rim and free fluid in the pouch of Douglas, we obtained correlation in most of the patients.
A complex extra ovarian adnexal mass with echogenic ring (tubal ring sign) could be demonstrated in 14 cases (73.6%).[14] Adnexal mass with fetal pole and cardiac activity could be demonstrated in two cases (10.5%); Ring of fire sign (Bagel sign) and free fluid in cul-de-sac could be demonstrated in almost all the cases. Two cases (10.5%) had ovarian ectopic -atypical echogenic cyst in the ovary with rupture. Pseudogestational sac in the uterine cavity was seen in 3 cases (15%).

2 cases (10.5%) presented with hemoperitoneum alone, without any evidence of any mass lesion. These results were correlating with previous studies.

**Torsion ovarian cyst**

Of the 5 patients, diagnosed as torsion, two were serous cystadenoma[11] (one of which was associated with pregnancy) other two were dermoid cysts (one of which was associated with pregnancy). One of which was normal ovary that had undergone torsion, due to torsion of long mesosalpinx.[3,5]

In up to 74% of cases, ultrasound imaging may demonstrate multiple small (up to 25 mm), uniform cysts aligned in the periphery of the engorged ovary. Unilateral enlargement of ovary with peripherally arranged follicles with pain abdomen are helpful in diagnosing ovarian torsion. Free fluid in the pouch of Douglas has been detected in up to 87% of cases of ovarian torsion. Decreased or absent venous flow is the most frequent finding (93%), which may reflect the early collapse of the compliant venous walls. A twisted vascular pedicle- whirlpool sign was detected in 88% of cases of ovarian torsion as per the study by Lee et al.

In our study, free fluid was present in all the cases of torsion[9]. Multiple peripherally arranged cysts found in one case (20%); absent venous flow demonstrated in two cases (40%). whirlpool sign was found in one case (20%). The imaging results were diagnostic in 50% cases; contributory in 50% cases.
Fig: 5 Enlarged ovary with peripherally arranged follicles[14]

Fig: 6 Torsed ovary with grossly diminished blood flow

Gray-Scale US Features of Ovarian Torsion
- Unilateral enlarged ovary (>4 cm)*
- String of pearls sign
- Coexistent mass within the twisted ovary
- Free pelvic fluid
- Twisted vascular pedicle
*Usually located in the midline and superior to the fundus of the uterus.

Fig: 7 Serous cystadenoma with torsion[19,20]

Fig: 8 Whirlpool sign

Fig: 9 Duplex ultra sound image with grossly diminished arterial blood flow

Fig: 10 Torsed dermoid cyst[20]

Ruptured ovarian cyst
Other emergencies were three ruptured ovarian cysts.
1. Ruptured serous cystadenoma-1-presented as complex ovarian cyst with massive amount of echogenic free fluid along with evidence of incomplete abortion.
2. Ruptured endometriotic cyst -1
3. Ruptured hemorrhagic cyst-1
All the lesions necessitated laparotomy\cite{1}.
Ultrasound imaging reports were diagnostic in 2 cases (66.6%) and contributory in one case (33.3%).

**Frequency distribution of USG findings observed in patients presented with acute abdominal pain.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Category of abdominal pain</th>
<th>USG findings</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Associated with Pregnancy</td>
<td>Ectopic gestation Acute</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Serous cystadenoma with rupture</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dermoid cyst with torsion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Serous cystadenoma with torsion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dermoid cyst with torsion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Normal ovary with torsion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Endometriotic cyst with rupture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hemorrhagic cyst with rupture</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

US results were 25% diagnostic and 75% contributory; thus diagnosis could be arrived at in almost all the cases of acute abdomen due to adnexal pathology. Results are analysed as either diagnostic or contributory. None of the results were erroneous.

*Diagnostic* - ability of the test to exactly diagnose the disease condition matching with histopathology. *Contributory* - ability of the test to play a part in arriving at the diagnosis including origin, location, texture and consistency but not exactly matching with the histopathology.
Accuracy of ultrasound imaging in diagnosing adnexal masses presenting with acute abdomen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Total number of Cases</th>
<th>Diagnostic n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Contributory n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Bibliography

selection of the most discriminating gray-scale and Doppler sonographic features. Radiology 1998;208:103–110.

