

Role of Point of Care Ultrasound in Diagnosis of Upper GI Bleed Secondary to Aorto-Esophageal Fistula

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Upper gastrointestinal bleed (UGIB) is a common presentation of various diseases of esophagus, stomach and duodenum. Aorto-esophageal fistula (AEF) is a rare but life-threatening cause of UGIB. The etiology of AEF includes thoracic aneurysms, foreign body ingestion, post-surgical complications, and esophageal cancer. Suspect AEF in patients with Chiari's triad (midthoracic pain, sentinel arterial hemorrhage, and exsanguination after symptom-free interval). Temporization followed by endoscopy and/or computer tomography angiography (CTA) is current standard-of-care. These may be unobtainable in hemodynamically unstable patients. Point-Of-Care-Ultrasound (POCUS) is a fast and convenient diagnostic tool available in this scenario. We review the case of a 75-year-old male who presented with PEA arrest and large volume hematemesis. He was too unstable for endoscopy and CTA despite massive transfusion. POCUS demonstrated thoracic aortic dissection. Ultimately, he received CTA chest which demonstrated descending aortic aneurysm with penetrating ulcer. Unfortunately, the patient expired before surgical intervention.