

Overview of ultrasound in pregnancy benefits and complications

Mahdi Mana Alabbas, Khalid Alabbas, Abdullah Omar Aljafaari, Ahmed Abdulhai Alsubahi, Khalid Awaad Alenizy, Saif Alshammari, Salman B Almobayedh, Mansour Mana Alghufaynah, Abdulmajeed Mohammad Alibrahem

Abstract:

Ultrasound assumed as a very safe and riskless screening, in this review we discuss the benefits, as well as negative aspects of US and risk factors. We performed comprehensive search using biomedical databases; Medline, and Embase, for studies concerned with ultrasound in pregnancy assessment published with English language up to, October 2017. The sound waves utilized in standard ultrasound scans are unknown to be dangerous to either mother or child. However, ultrasound can be harmful if it finds unclear outcomes or abnormalities. This can make individuals feel anxious and worried and might also indicate that more evaluations are needed. These extra examinations can be intensive and sometimes have severe effects that are difficult for the parents-to-be to cope with. But the ultrasound scan can also give the impression that the unborn child is developing normally even though it does have health problems. The expectant parents falsely assume that their baby is healthy. It could be quite a shock if their kid is born fully unexpectedly with serious health problems or anomalies. Furthermore, not all scan results are clear and not all problems that are identified during an ultrasound evaluation can be treated. This can be unsettling, difficult to manage and require difficult decisions to be made. If there are indications that the unborn child might be physically or mentally disabled, the concern of whether to abort or continue the pregnancy could occur. This can lead to internal conflict.

Introduction:

Ultrasound is widely approved in clinical practice, and could improve the outcome of pregnancy. In a recently-reported randomised regulated test, routine ultrasound screening at 16-20 weeks was revealed significantly to reduce perinatal death, generally due to early detection of fetal malformations [1]. Other studies have likewise revealed the capability of ultrasound to estimate the age of the fetus, [2] improve the discovery rate of intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), [3] and minimize the occurrence of induction of labour for post-term pregnancy [4]. Doppler ultrasound technology supplies information on placental blood flow, [5] and systolic/ diastolic proportions from circulation velocity waveforms provide an indirect assessment of placental vascular resistance. Ultrasound practitioners are often asked the question of whether the technology is safe for the fetus. The response generally given is "Of course. Ultrasound is not x-rays; it is not invasive, has been utilized for near 50 years and is perfectly safe." While this response includes some correct facts (ultrasound is not x-rays and it has been made use of for a long time), the principle of absolute safety is not scientifically valid, and in addition, the level of understanding relating to prospective bioeffects of ultrasound in tissues is, by and large, very low amongst clinicians.

Ultrasound assumed as a very safe and riskless screening, in this review we discuss the benefits, as well as negative aspects of US and risk factors.

Methodology:

We performed comprehensive search using biomedical databases; Medline, and Embase, for studies concerned with ultrasound in pregnancy assessment published with English language up to, October 2017. keywords used in our search through the databases were as; "pregnancy imaging",

“ultrasound”, “complications”. More relevant articles were recruited from references lists scanning of each included study.

Discussion:

· **Definitions**

When analyzing benefits and dangers of DUS, specifically in obstetrics, it is important to have clear interpretations. Benefit is an idea that is more conveniently definite compared to threat.

Advantage: From Old French bienfait, good deed, from Latin benefactum, from benefacere, to do a solution, something that advertises or enhances health, an advantage [6]. For instance, performing a shown ultrasound will offer numerous benefits as explained below.

Disadvantage: The ISO 31000 (2009)/ ISO Guide 73:2002 interpretation of danger is the "result of uncertainty on objectives." [7]. This is less than a clear meaning as far as clinical scenarios and ultrasound, particularly, are concerned. A more clear definition is the probable frequency and probable size of future loss [8]. How often a loss or something poor (damage to health, environment, and things) is likely to take place, with a certain degree of possibility, as a result of an action or procedure, and how much loss is likely to result. These are the 3 important attributes of danger: probability of taking place, nature, and magnitude of injury. It has been, particularly, related to the use of medical tools [9].

· **Risk assessment**

This is a problem that always needs to be attended to when going over dangers. Two methods are possible in threat evaluation: just how much injury serves to obtain the preferred results (risk-benefit proportion evaluation) or just how much damage can be avoided by keeping the action one is taking into consideration or changing it (the precautionary concept). The risk- advantage concept is what is virtually universally used in medicine to justify a medical analysis treatment (such as ultrasound) or a therapeutic intervention. If the benefit to be acquired from the procedure in regards to diagnosis (ultrasound) or intervention (newly discovered and not yet advertised cancer or AIDS drug for example) is regarded to be adequate, then, even if this diagnostic or interventional treatment carries some dangers (acknowledged or assumed), the advantage overrides these risks, presuming the subject understands those threats and is willing to take them. The precautionary principle (PP) is a diametrically opposed honest, political, financial approach specifying that if a specific action could create severe damages to the public or, in the case of ultrasound, the fetal patient, in the lack of a clinical consensus that damage would certainly not take place, the burden of proof falls on those that would support taking the action [10] As a mentioned concept, it is a lot less familiar to the clinical area although it is practiced in everyday clinical circumstances and is extremely appropriate when considering safety and risks of a treatment, such as prenatal ultrasound. Primum non nocere (first do no injury) and the As Low as Reasonably Achievable (ALARA) standards are direct applications of this concept. The straightforward articulation of the concept, particularly of analysis ultrasound, generally, and home entertainment ultrasound in particular is that, even if a particular action or procedure has not been confirmed to be harmful, it is better to avoid it so as not to take the risk until safety is developed via clear, scientific evidence, commonly shared as "Better safe compared to sorry" [11]. A significant difference with the danger- advantage principle is that proponents of the PP think that public activity is necessary if there is any kind of proof of most likely or substantial harm, nonetheless limited but possible, and the

burden of proof is shifted from showing the existence of danger to demonstrating its absence [12]. Therefore, epidemiologic study on chronic diseases and using surrogate for human studies (e.g., animal research or tissue cultures) have been revealed to be unsure [13]. A significant goal of the PP is to assist delineate (ideally quantitatively) the opportunity that some exposure is hazardous, also in cases where this is not developed beyond affordable uncertainty [14]. The timeless statistical strategy to theory testing is unhelpful, because lack of value can be due either to uninformative information or to genuine lack of impact (type II error) [15]. Furthermore, no moral opinion is formed of an individual when treating them, however if the main focus is upon precaution, it can be deemed morally wrong not to take preventative steps. The entire precaution strategy is imbued with what may show up to many as an excessively moralistic tone [16]. Additionally, the chance of occurrence of a trouble that is attempting to avoid needs to be high (which does not use, as far as we understand to ultrasound) and preventative measures need to be effective. Thus, this strategy may be adopted with some constraints and this is, in fact, exactly just what ALARA recommends [17]. A lot of scientists and specialist organizations have suggested such a technique in clinical obstetrical ultrasound [18] probably without the realization that the PP was the real impetus.

· **Benefits of ultrasound in pregnancy**

An extensive analysis of the benefits of ultrasound in obstetrics is beyond the scope of this article. Furthermore, clinicians are, generally, much more familiar with this aspect of DUS than with potential risks of the procedure.

Benefits that have clearly been demonstrated (evidencebased analysis) include [19] accurate dating (reduction in post-term by 40%), definition of exact location (when the question of an ectopic pregnancy arises), proof of viability, early diagnosis of multiple gestations, accurate follow-up of fetal growth, detection of fetal anomalies [20] (although some will question whether this is a real

health benefit as it will increase stress and anxiety level and may lead to termination of the pregnancy), and placental location and implantation (particularly important in cases of prior cesarean section). The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has published guidelines for obstetrical ultrasound,[21] which include the following benefits: accurate determination of gestational age (best done in the first half of pregnancy), fetal number, viability, and placental location, diagnosis of many major fetal anomalies. In addition, ultrasonography is safe for the fetus when used appropriately (level A: good and consistent evidence); detection of fetal growth disturbances and abnormalities in amniotic fluid volume (level B: limited or inconsistent evidence); in the absence of specific indications for a first trimester examination, the optimal timing for a single ultrasound examination is at 18–20 weeks of gestation and benefits and limitations of ultrasonography should be discussed with all patients (level C: consensus and expert opinion)[21].

An additional benefit that has been reported in the literature and that relates more to the mother (or parents) than the fetus is improved bonding. This has been reported particularly since the advent of clinical 3- and 4- dimensional ultrasound [22] (although some refute that 3- dimensional ultrasound is superior) and improved bonding was already described when 2-dimensional ultrasound became widely utilized.

· **Risks of ultrasound in pregnancy**

There are 2 categories of risks perhaps connected with using DUS in obstetrics: analysis mistakes and feasible organic results.

Diagnostic errors can be separated into overdiagnosis, underdiagnosis, and issues with coverage of the results of the evaluation. Several of these misdiagnoses may be second to artifacts that might

take place during the performance of an ultrasound examination, at acquisition, handling, or display, in both 2- and 3-dimensional ultrasound [23]. Instances of the extra typical artefacts consist of shadowing (causing "absence" of a structure), reverberation (adding a structure that is not there) yet also some as a result of control of a reconstructed quantity with possible deletion of a framework by electronic scalpel [23].

Overdiagnosis: This consists of "invented" lesions, such as existence of a mass that is not there or lack of an organ or part of it (when the structure is completely normal). These false-positive findings could lead to unneeded follow-up examinations and even restorative treatments, consisting of termination of maternity.

Underdiagnosis: In this group, an abnormality is not imagined or only partly determined. This could take the form of missed findings (false negative): missed fetal structural abnormality (consisting of missing out on part), missed fetus (in multifetal pregnancies), missed pathology of the placenta (placenta previa, accreta, etc.), missed ectopic (by puzzling the pseudosac for an intrauterine pregnancy), or missed mass. A partial medical diagnosis is likewise part of the underdiagnosis category.

Reporting problems: Misreport, e.g., incorrect dating, wrong approximated fetal weight misdiagnosis (such as sex or presentation), failure to refer or to execute a scan, miscommunication ("Everything is OK" despite the fact a pathology exists or "We'll talk with your medical professional"), no formal record or mistake in report ("there was ventriculomegaly" when it should read "there was no ventriculomegaly"), and absence of documents.

Underdiagnosis and reporting concerns might cause getting worse of the disorder or to the birth (potentially undesirable, if the anomaly was prenatally recognized) of a fetus with anomalies and prospective succeeding lawsuits.

The reason one needs to think about organic impacts when examining ultrasound is that ultrasound is a sound wave, a kind of energy, with alternating favorable and adverse pressure. Because of this, it could have several impacts in cells it passes through (hence the term bioeffects). 2 major devices are understood to be involved in potential unhealthy impacts in tissues: thermal and non-thermal (or mechanical) [24].

Thermal results are an indirect outcome of the flow of the waveform, with acoustic energy being transformed into heat. This constitutes the significant potential adverse effect in embryos and unborn children [25]. There have been many reports of harmful impacts of heat in pregnancy on the embryo/fetus in animal studies from both non-ultrasound and ultrasound technology [26]. This seems to be the instance if the temperature rise is 1.5 °C over the physical degree. At higher degrees, the capacity for damages rises with period of exposure and level of elevation. The embryo/fetus is specifically susceptible to outside insult in the very early pregnancy (as much as 10-12 weeks) although several organs remain to develop later on in maternity and small impacts or mild behavior changes, if they exist, are very difficult to diagnose or show.

Non-thermal devices, a direct effect of the alternating pressure, could even more be separated right into acoustic cavitation (inertial and non-inertial) and non-cavitational mechanisms, i.e., acoustic radiation force (time-averaged pressure exerted by the ultrasound beam), acoustic radiation torque (generating in the insonated tissue a propensity to rotate or spin), and acoustic streaming (circulatory flow). Non-thermal devices appear to not be a significant concern in obstetrical ultrasound [27]. The major factor is that the existence of cavitation foci (bubbles) is necessary for

cavitation to occur and the fetal lungs and bowels (areas where such results with resulting hemorrhages have been explained in neonates³⁴) do not contain any type of air or gas.

Bioeffects have been defined in animal models however not in humans, particularly when epidemiological evaluation is tried. The only result that appears to be real is non-right handedness, although it appears to be prevalent mainly in male fetuses and with minimal analytical importance. Other subtle (in term of diagnosis difficulty, not in term of the extent or the impact of the condition) impacts such as autism have been stimulated however not unquestionably showed [28].

Early gestation is a special situation since it is well known that the fetus is most sensitive to outside insults during organogenesis, mostly up until 10-- 12 weeks, [29] although numerous organs continue to establish later. This is especially essential with the ever-increasing use endovaginal ultrasound in very early pregnancy, in reproductive endocrinology, and in very early anatomy survey.

Specific caution is recommended for Doppler ultrasound, especially pulsed (likewise known as spooky). Mean ISPTA for Bmode is 34 mW/cm² and 1180 mW/cm² for pulsed Doppler, a significant difference. An extremely worrying research was reported from Australia regarding possible bioeffects of Doppler [30]. Brains of chicks were exposed in ovo on day 19 of a 21-day incubation duration to 5 or 10 minutes of B-mode or to 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 minutes of pulsed Doppler ultrasound. Learning and memory function were examined post-hatch. B-mode exposure did not impact memory function. Significant short-, intermediate-, and longterm memory disability, nonetheless, occurred adhering to 4 and 5 min of pulsed Doppler exposure. Additionally, the chicks were still unable to learn with a 2nd training session. While straight extrapolation is not necessarily valid, this research, however, raises some level of problem relating to possible refined effects of

Doppler ultrasound. Limiting direct exposure of the early unborn child to pulsed Doppler is strongly recommended [31].

Conclusion:

The sound waves utilized in standard ultrasound scans are unknown to be dangerous to either mother or child. However, ultrasound can be harmful if it finds unclear outcomes or abnormalities. This can make individuals feel anxious and worried and might also indicate that more evaluations are needed. These extra examinations can be intensive and sometimes have severe effects that are difficult for the parents-to-be to cope with. But the ultrasound scan can also give the impression that the unborn child is developing normally even though it does have health problems. The expectant parents falsely assume that their baby is healthy. It could be quite a shock if their kid is born fully unexpectedly with serious health problems or anomalies. Furthermore, not all scan results are clear and not all problems that are identified during an ultrasound evaluation can be treated. This can be unsettling, difficult to manage and require difficult decisions to be made. If there are indications that the unborn child might be physically or mentally disabled, the concern of whether to abort or continue the pregnancy could occur. This can lead to internal conflict.

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