Emergency physician use of ultrasonography to evaluate hypotension: a case report

SSW Chan

In a non-trauma patient, several conditions giving rise to hypotension and cardiovascular collapse can be immediately life-threatening. These include cardiac tamponade, ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm, pulmonary embolism, and massive acute myocardial infarction. Prompt diagnosis is essential because correct immediate treatment and disposal decisions will affect the outcome. This is a report of a case in which the emergency physician used ultrasonography to evaluate a patient with hypotension, leading to timely intervention. Sonographic diagnosis also guided subsequent disposal and management decisions. This utility of ultrasonography in the emergency department setting is discussed. (Hong Kong j.emerg.med. 2002;9:226-230)

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