

**Sonographic morphology score, Doppler ultrasound
and tumor markers in the assessment of adnexal masses
and the relation to the histopathology**

THESIS

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CONTENTS

	Page
■List of Abbreviations	
■List of Tables.....	
■List of Figures.....	
■Introduction.....	1
■Aim of the Work.....	5
■Review of Literature:	
• Adnexal masses and role of 2D ultrasonography in their diagnosis	6
▪ Sonographic morphology score.....	55
• Doppler ultrasonography of pelvic adnexal masses	68
• Tumor markers in assessment of ovarian cancer and other adnexal mass.....	87
■Patients and Methods.....	105
■Results.....	112
■Discussion.....	149
■Conclusion.....	172
■Recommendations	174
■Summary.....	175
■References	178
■Arabic Summary	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA125	Cancer antigen 125
CA 19-9	Carbohydrate antigen 19-9
2DU/S	Two dimensional ultrasound
HCG	Human chorionic gonadotrophin
LPA	Lysophosphatidic acid
M-CSF	Macrophage-colony stimulating factor
NPV	Negative predictive value
OC125	Ovarian cancer 125
PI	Pulsatility index
PID	Pelvic inflammatory disease
PPV	Positive predictive value
"P" value	Probability value
RI	Resistance index
RMI	Risk of malignancy index
ROC	Risk of ovarian cancer
S/D	Systolic/diastolic
TAS	Transabdominal sonography
TOA	Tubo-ovarian abscess
TVS	Transvaginal sonography

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
1	Ovarian volume and morphological changes with different age groups.....	9
2	World health organization histological classification of ovarian tumors	27
3	Scoring system for cystic teratomas based on transvaginal color and pulsed Doppler.....	38
4	Detailed description of the four previously published scoring systems.....	59-62
5	The diagnostic accuracy of the five scoring systems.....	66
6	Comparison of the diagnostic accuracy of the multicenter score vs. the other four scores.....	67
7	Other medical conditions known to elevate CA125 levels.	91
8	Non-malignant causes of CA19.9 elevation	98
9	Age and parity in patients with ovarian lesions (60 patients had adnexal masses of whom 12 were postmenopausal)	113
10	Distribution of patients according to age by decades	113
11	Distribution of ovarian masses in patients by reproductive years.....	114
12	Relation between adnexal masses pathology and age.....	114
13	Distribution of parity according to the pathological type of the adnexal mass.....	115
14	Relation between Pathology of adnexal mass and parity.....	115
15	Site of adnexal Masses in the study population.....	116
16	Nature of adnexal masses in the study population.....	117
17	Symptomatology in the study population	118
18	Presence of ascites according to the nature of the tumor.....	119

Table	Title	Page
19	Cytological examination of ascitic fluid in different tumor types	119
20	Appearance of the wall by 2D ultrasound	121
21	Appearance of septa by 2D ultrasound	122
22	Echogenicity of the masses by 2D ultrasound	123
23	Other morphological criteria of the masses	124
24	Sonographic diagnosis among the study population	125
25	Pathological diagnosis of adnexal lesions	125
26	Distribution of the SMS of the ovarian masses in the study population	126
27	Shows the mean $\pm$ SD and p value of the Sonographic morphology score.....	127
28	SMS in the prediction of ovarian malignancy in the study population	128
29	Value of individual sonographic features of ovarian masses in the diagnosis of malignancy	129
30	Color flow mapping in relation to tumor pathologic type	130
31	Mean PI and RI $\pm$ SD according to the pathological nature of the masses with detectable flow	131
32	The sensitivity and specificity of Doppler techniques in the diagnosis of malignant ovarian tumors.....	132
33	Mean, $\pm$ SD and P value of RI of studied cases	133
34	Sensitivity and specificity of SMS, Doppler and combined methods.....	134
35	Various cut off levels of CA 125 in prediction of ovarian malignancy	135
36	Various cut off levels of CA 19-9 in prediction of ovarian malignancy	136
37	Ca 125 value and relation to pathology in study population.....	137
38	Ca 19-9 value and relation to pathology in study population.....	138
39	Combined CA125 and CA 19-9 and the prediction of nature of adnexal masses in comparison to CA 125 alone.....	138

Table	Title	Page
40	Combined Clinical data,SMS,Doppler and tumor markers in prediction of nature of adnexal masses.....	139

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.	Title	Page
1	Normal ovary in a woman of menstrual age	10
2	Normal ovary in a postmenopausal women	12
3	Simple ovarian cyst	21
4	Hemorrhagic ovarian cyst	23
5	Multilocular endometrioma	25
6	Endometrioma filled with homogenous echoes	26
7	Ovarian papillary cystadenocarcinoma with solid nodule in the wall. Color Doppler demonstrates flow within solid nodule and wall of tumour	32
8	Ovarian mucinous cystadenocarcinoma with thick septation and ascites. Low resistance flow with PI of 0.42	33
9	Ovarian fibroma. The mass has sonographic features to those of a uterine fibroid	35
10	Ovarian dermoid tumour with highly echogenic solid nodule of tissues in the wall	37
11	Hydrosalpinx shows dilated fallopian tube (arrows) with tortuous, fluid-filled configuration with folds (arrow head)	43
12	Bilateral hydrosalpinges through TAS	44
13	Tubo-ovarian abscess	45
14	Undisturbed tubal ectopic pregnancy. Uterus to the left shows thickened endometrium	49
15	Disturbed ectopic pregnancy with free intraperitoneal fluid	51
16	ROC curve for SMS of dermoid cyst	64
17	ROC curve for SMS of adnexal masses	67
18	Doppler waveform of a normal ovary showing dominant follicle....	75
19	Malignant ovarian neoplasm shows central blood flow	80
20	A: Transvaginal B-mode sonogram shows a complex adnexal mass with solid components and thick septa. Histological evaluation revealed a primary ovarian carcinoma. B: 2DPD of the complex adnexal mass showing abundant blood flow	82

Fig.	Title	Page
21	A cystic teratoma. Pulsed Doppler analysis (right) demonstrates moderate impedance {RI = 0.58) to blood flow.....	93
22	Distribution of patients according to age by decades	113
23	Distribution of parity according to the pathological types of adnexal mass	115
24	Nature of adnexal masses in the study population.....	116
25	Symptomatology in the study population	117
26	Appearance of the wall by 2D ultrasound	120
27	Appearance of septa by 2D ultrasound.....	121
28	Echogenicity of the masses by 2D ultrasound.....	122
29	Other morphological criteria of the masses	123
30	Sonographic diagnosis among the study population	125
31	Pathological diagnosis of adnexal lesions	125
32	Distribution of the SMS of the ovarian masses in the study Population.....	127
33	SMS in the prediction of ovarian malignancy in the study population	128
34	Value of individual sonographic features of ovarian masses in the diagnosis of malignancy.....	133
35	Color flow mapping in relation to tumor pathologic type	136
36	Mean PI and RI according to the pathological nature of the masses with detectable flow	132
37	The sensitivity and specificity of Doppler techniques in the diagnosis of malignant ovarian tumors.....	133
38	Various cut off levels of CA 125 in prediction of ovarian malignancy.....	136

Fig.	Title	Page
39	Various cut off levels of CA 19-9 in prediction of ovarian malignancy.....	137
40	Cystic Multilocular Ovarian malignant tumor with vasculature in the septa.....	140
41	Power Doppler of Adenocarcinoma of the ovary . RI = 0.58.....	140
42	Cyst adenocarcinoma, with Doppler showing neovascularization, High RI > 1.....	141
43	A malignant ovarian tumor showing internal papilla and peripheral vascularity	141
44	Ovarian carcinoma associated with pelvic infection represented by hydrosalpinx, the Doppler of the mass shows central vascularity	142
45	Color Doppler of a cystadenocarcinoma of the ovary. The RI = 0.416.	142
46	Ovarian Endometrioid tumor, formed mainly of solid areas.....	143
47	Ovarian teratoma, note the mixed solid and cystic areas.....	143
48	Ovarian teratoma with solid and cystic areas.....	144
49	Doppler of Granulosa cell tumor, the ovary is seen displaced by a solid mass with definite capsule with vascularity in the interior.....	144
50	Sertoli leydig tumor with vascularized periphery.....	145
51	Ectopic Pregnancy , heterogenous solid mass outside the ovary with high vascularity and the ovary is showing a corpus luteum.....	145
52	Hemorrhagic corpus luteum , RI 0.44, PI 0.64.	146
53	Mucinous cystadenoma	146
54	Serous cystadenoma.....	147
55	Simple serous cystadenoma.....	147
56	Color Doppler of papillary serous ovarian carcinoma.....	148
57	Color Doppler of mucinous cyst adenoma with multilocular lesion.....	148

ABSTRACT

Adnexal masses are considered a group of the most common diseases in gynecology and ovarian tumors represent two thirds of these cases. 2D ultrasound has become the main diagnostic tool in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Color Doppler in addition to serum level of CA125 and CA 19-9 can help in the assessment of adnexal masses. This study included sixty patients with adnexal masses and the role of the previous tools was studied in the assessment of these lesions. It was found that, clinical picture has the lowest sensitivity to predict malignancy. Doppler studies and serum level of tumor markers can improve the assessment of adnexal masses and differentiation between benign and malignant ovarian tumors.

Key Words:

Adnexal masses-ovarian tumors-2D ultrasound-Doppler-CA125-CA 19-9.

INTRODUCTION

Ovarian neoplasms present an increasing challenge to the physician and ovarian cancer is the most lethal of all gynecological cancers, presenting late and responding poorly to treatment (**Gaughan et al., 2006**). Malignant ovarian tumors are the fourth most common cause of death in women (**Poveda , 2005**). Approximately 4-24% of adnexal masses in premenopausal women and 39-63% in postmenopausal women are malignant (**Myers et al., 2006**).

Ovarian masses may be encountered in patients being evaluated for a complaint referable to the pelvis or in asymptomatic patients. Most women with ovarian cancer have no symptoms for long periods of time. When symptoms develop, they are often vague and nonspecific. In early stage disease, the patient may experience irregular menses if she is premenopausal. If a pelvic mass is compressing the bladder or rectum, she may report urinary frequency or constipation. Occasionally, she may perceive lower abdominal distension, pressure, or pain, such as dyspareunia. Acute symptoms, such as pain secondary to rupture or torsion, are unusual (**Olson et al, 2001**). Moreover, in advanced-stage disease, patients most often have symptoms related to the presence of ascites, omental metastases, or a bowel metastases. The symptoms include abdominal distension, bloating, constipation, nausea or anorexia. Premenopausal women may complain of irregular or heavy menses, whereas vaginal bleeding may occur in postmenopausal women (**Olson et al., 2001**).

Because the patient usually complains of abdominal symptoms, she may not have a pelvic examination, and a tumor may be missed. A variety of benign conditions of the reproductive tract, such as pelvic inflammatory disease, endometriosis, and pedunculated uterine leiomyoma, can simulate ovarian cancer. Non-gynecologic causes of an adnexal mass, such as inflammatory disease or neoplastic colonic mass or even a pelvic kidney can simulate ovarian cancer **(Berek and Hacker, 2000)**.

A careful history taking and pelvic examination is an important step for the diagnosis, however, the diagnostic accuracy of pelvic examination varied in different series between 50% and 90%. It is affected by several variables including the experience of the gynecologist, the type of the patient and the characteristics of the mass. Several factors may hinder the diagnosis, even for an experienced gynecologist: virginity, obesity, associated pregnancy, ascites and pelvic tenderness **(Roman et al., 1997)**.

Many diagnostic procedures have been used for a thorough evaluation of such cases, among them ultrasonography is a currently used tool for the diagnosis. The information about the likelihood that the mass is benign or malignant is important because it will affect the clinical management and the therapeutic approach.

Ultrasound examination for the prediction of malignancy in an ovarian mass has been limited by the lack of cut off criteria for evaluation of such masses but with the advent of high frequent transvaginal ultrasonography and 3D ultrasonography, new opportunities are presented in characterization of ovarian masses together with closer proximity to pelvic

vessels. Although, the gray scale prediction of benignity was quite reliable, many benign lesions were placed in the group of tumors suggestive of malignancy (false positive) because of their gray scale features (**Hata et al., 1999**).

Previous studies have shown that color Doppler ultrasonography may be able to detect neovascularization in some tumors of the ovary and together with a low resistance to blood flow, enabled the prediction of malignancy (**Jokubkiene et al., 2007**).

The observations made in the late 1980s indicated that the transvaginal color Doppler ultrasonography can be used in the detection of ovarian cancer and has generated a stream of clinical trials. However, the conflicting results of numerous publications have led to major controversy. Transvaginal color Doppler ultrasonography saves time and increases the accuracy of measurements, though masses over 10 cm in size are best evaluated using conventional transabdominal sonography. The most important advantage of this technique is the display of blood flow across the entire scanning plane of the pelvis. Therefore pulsed Doppler sample volume can be placed accurately on the area of interest using the guidance of the color flow, and spectral wave form analysis can be done easily, as each vessel imaged by color Doppler can be explored by pulsed Doppler and flow can be assessed without interference from other vessels lying distally, or in close proximity to the same axis of investigation and having a different circulatory patterns and hence color Doppler seems to produce a better characterization of pelvic tumor vascularity than any other current available diagnostic method (**Kurjak et al., 1989**).

Although the value of resistance and pulsatility indices have shown promise, various thresholds for these parameters have been proposed and significant overlap between benign and malignant (or border line) masses was found (**Czekierdowski, 2002**). Greater accuracy of color Doppler may be achieved with an additional qualitative assessment of blood flow in ovarian tumors as proposed by **Fleischer et al. (1993)**, stressing the importance of blood vessel distribution within the tumor (peripheral in benign tumor and central in malignant tumor).

Tumor markers including CA-125 and CA 19-9 have been shown to contribute to early diagnosis of ovarian cancers (**Czekierdowski, 2002**).

Because of the many medical diagnoses that give false-positive CA-125 and CA 19-9 results, they cannot be used for general population screening for ovarian cancer in either premenopausal or postmenopausal women (**Erdogan et al.,2005**).