

***Liver and Spleen Stiffness Measurements Based on
Acoustic Radiation Force Impulse Elastography for
Noninvasive Assessment of Esophageal Varices in HCV-
Related Advanced Fibrosis.***

*Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for
MSc degree in Infectious Disease and Endemic Hepatic and Gastrointestinal
Diseases*

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Upper gastrointestinal endoscopy (UGIE) screening for esophageal varices (EV) is expensive for the health system and invasive for the patients.

Aim: To identify the reliability of liver stiffness (LS) and spleen stiffness (SS) as noninvasive predictors of EV, and to compare them with other noninvasive parameters.

METHODS: Two hundred patients with HCV-related advanced fibrosis including liver cirrhosis were subjected to: Demographic, clinical, laboratory tests, abdominal ultrasound and Doppler, FIB-4 score, LOK index, platelets to spleen diameter ratio (PSR), LS measured by FibroScan®, LS and SS measured by acoustic radiation force impulse (ARFI) and finally UGIE.

RESULTS: Of the 200 patients (Mean age 54.9±8 years; Male 55.5%; CTP class A 72%; Fibrosis stage[F3] 4.5%), 90 patients had EV. For prediction of EV, spleen longitudinal diameter (SD) and splenic vein diameter (SVD) were the best parameters among all the ultrasonographic parameters. PSR, LOK index and FIB-4 score showed good diagnostic performance. Also, SS and LS showed good diagnostic performance, However, SS had diagnostic performance better than LS (AUROC: 0.760 and 0.70, 95% CI 0.69-0.83 and 0.63-0.77, respectively). The AUROC increased when LS and/or SS was combined with SD, SVD, PSR or FIB-4 score in a simple prediction model. The prediction model (SD×SVD×SS) showed the best diagnostic performance (AUROC: 0.85, 95% CI: 0.79-0.90). Followed by prediction model (LS×SS/PSR) (AUROC: 0.83, 95% CI: 0.77-0.88).

CONCLUSION: LS and SS are reliable predictive tools to presence of EV. Combination of LS and/ or SS with other parameters showed better diagnostic performance than LS or SS alone. These results could be used to reduce the need for routine upper gastrointestinal endoscopy screening.

Keywords: Noninvasive, ARFI, Liver Stiffness, Spleen Stiffness, Varices.

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CONTENTS

<i>Abstract</i>	(i)
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	(iii)
<i>Abbreviations</i>	(I)
<i>List of Tables</i>	(IV)
<i>List of Figures</i>	(VI)
<i>Introduction</i>	(VIII)
<i>Aim of the Work</i>	(XI)

Chapter I: Hepatic Fibrosis

- Introducion	1
- Mechanisms of Hepatic Fibrosis.....	2
- Cellular Sources of Extracellular Matrix	4
- Hepatic Stellate Cell Activation	7
- Degradation of Extracellular Matrix	12

Chapter II: Portal Hypertention

- Introduction	14
- Formation of Varices	18
- Portal Hypertensive Gastropathy	20
- Splenomegaly	21
- Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy	21
- Esophageal Varices	21
- Gastric Varices	25
- Portal Hypertensive Gastropathy	26
- Other Endoscopic Techniques	27

Chapter III: Parameter to Predict Esophageal Varices

- Variables Relate to Portal Hypertension and hypersplenism.....	29
- Predictive Scores	30

- Variables Relate to Liver Fibrosis	32
- Ultrasound and Doppler	33
- Transient Elastography	36
- Computed Tomography	42
- Magnetic Resonance Elastography	42
- Further approaches to noninvasive predict of EVs.....	43
- Hepatic Venous Pressure Gradient	44

Chapter IV: Acoustic Radiation Force Impulse

- Introduction.....	45
- Strain Imaging	47
- Shear Wave Imaging	51
- Clinical Applications	56
- Acoustic Radiation Force Impulse Imaging	56
- Point Shear-Wave Elastography	57
- Liver Fibrosis	61
- Solid Focal Liver Lesions	63
- Portal Hypertension	65
- Possible Limitations	66

<i>Patient and Methods</i>	67
<i>Results</i>	75
<i>Discussion</i>	96
<i>Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation</i>	103
<i>References</i>	106
<i>Arabic summary</i>	134

ABBREVIATIONS

ADH	Antidiuretic Hormone
ALT	Alanine Transaminase
ARFI	Acoustic Radiation Force Impulse
AST	Aspartate Transaminase
ATII	Angiotensin II
AUROC	Area Under ROC Curve
bFGF	Basic Fibroblast Growth Factor
CCL21	Chemokine (C-C motif) Ligand 21
CCR5	Chemokine (C-C motif) Receptor 5
CDT	Carbohydrate Deficient Transferrin
CIx	Congestion Index
CO	Carbon monoxide
CPSS	Congenital Portosystemic Shunts
CT	Computed Tomography
CTGF	Connective Tissue Growth Factor
Cu	Copper
CVC	Cranial Vena Cava
CVP	Central venous pressure
ECM	Extracellular Matrix
EDHS	The Egyptian Demographic Health Survey
EFSUMB	European Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology
EGD	Esophagogastroduodenoscopy
EGF	Epidermal Growth Factor
ET	Endothelin
EV	Esophageal Varices
EVRS	Esophageal Varices Risk Score
FHVP	Free Hepatic Venous Pressure
FT	FibroTest
GI	Gastrointestinal
GOV	Gastroesophageal Varices
HBV/HCV	Hepatitis B/C Virus
HGF	Hepatocyte Growth Factor
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HSC	Hepatic Stellate Cells
HVPG	Hepatic Venous Pressure Gradient
kPa	Kilopascal
ICAM-1	Intercellular Adhesion Molecule-1
IGV	Isolated Gastric Varices
IHVR	Intrahepatic Venous Resistance
IQR	Interquartile Range
IVC	Inferior Vena Cava
LEV	Large Esophageal Varices
LS, LSM	Liver Stiffness, Liver Stiffness Measurement
M	Median
MAPSS	Multiple Acquired Portosystemic Shunts
MCP-1	Monocyte Chemoattractant Protein-1
MMPs	Matrix Metalloproteinases
m/s	Meter per second
MT1-MMP	Membrane-Type Matrix Metalloproteinase 1
MRE	Magnetic Resonance Elastography
mRNA	Messenger Ribonucleic Acid
NADPH	Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide Phosphate
NAFLD	Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease
NASH	Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis
NE	Norepinephrine
NCPH	Noncirrhotic Portal Hypertension
NO	Nitric Oxide
NOS	Nitric Oxide Synthase
NOX	Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate oxidase
NPV	Negative Predictive Value
pANCA	Perinuclear Neutrophil Cytoplasmic Antigen
PBF	Portal Blood Flow
PC	Prothrombin Concentration
PDGF	Platelet-Derived Growth Factor
PHG	Portal Hypertensive Gastropathy
PHT	Portal Hypertension
PPV	Positive Predictive Value
PSR	Platelet Count to Spleen Diameter Ratio
pSWE	Point Shear-Wave Elastography

PV	Portal Vein
PVD	Portal Vein Diameter
PVfV	Portal Vein Flow Volume
PVP	Portal Vein Pressure
PVR	Peripheral Vascular Resistance
PVV	Portal Vein Velocity
RAAS	Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone-Sympathetic System
RANTES	Regulated on Activation, Normal T Cell Expressed and Secreted
RLD	Right Lobe Diameter
RLD/Alb	Right Lobe Diameter to Albumin Ratio
ROI	Region Of Interest
ROS	Reactive Oxygen Species
SD	Splenic Longitudinal Diameter
Se	Sensitivity
SEC	Sinusoidal Endothelial Cell
SLA	Soluble Liver Antigen
SOS	Sinusoidal obstruction syndrome
Sp	Specificity
SPARC	Secreted protein acidic and rich in cysteine
SS	Spleen Stiffness
SSI	Supersonic shear imaging
SV	Splenic Vein
SVD	Splenic Vein Diameter
SVfV	Splenic Vein Flow Volume
SVV	Splenic Vein Velocity
TE	Transient Elastography
TGF	Tissue Growth Factor
TIMPs	Tissue Inhibitors of Metalloproteinases
TIPS	Transjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic Shunt
TNF α	Tumor Necrosis Factor alpha
US	Ultrasound
VEGF	Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor
VTTQ	Virtual Touch Tissue Quantification
WBC	White Blood Cell
WFUMB	World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Subject	Page
Table (2.1)	Classification of portal hypertension	15
Table (3.1)	Summary of diagnostic accuracy of LSM for the detection of EV	41
Table (4.1)	The elastography methods	47
Table (6.1)	Baseline characteristics of the studied patients	75
Table (6.2)	Ultrasonographic data of the studied patients	76
Table (6.3)	FibroScan® and ARFI data of the studied patients	76
Table (6.4)	The Upper GI Endoscopy data of the studied patients	77
Table (6.5)	Demographic characteristics of the studied patients in relation to the presence of EV	78
Table (6.6)	Correlation between past history and presence of EV	79
Table (6.7)	Correlation between clinical data and presence of EV	79
Table (6.8)	Laboratory data, CHILD score, MELD score, FIB-4 score and LOK index in relation to presence of EV	80
Table (6.9)	Ultrasonographic data, Right Lobe Diameter/Serum Albumin Ratio and Platelets Count/Spleen Diameter Ratio in relation to the presence of EV	81
Table (6.10)	ARFI Quantitative data in relation to presence of EV	81
Table (6.11)	Diagnostic performance of RLD for the prediction of EV	82
Table (6.12)	Diagnostic performance of PVD for the prediction of EV	83
Table (6.13)	Diagnostic performance of PVFV for the prediction of EV	84
Table (6.14)	Diagnostic performance of PV CIx for the prediction of EV	85
Table (6.15)	Diagnostic performance of SD for the prediction of EV	86
Table (6.16)	Diagnostic performance of SVD for the prediction of EV	87
Table (6.17)	Diagnostic performance of SVFV for the prediction of EV	88
Table (6.18)	Diagnostic performance of SV CIx for the prediction of	89

List of Tables

	EV	
Table (6.19)	Diagnostic performance of liver stiffness measured by ARFI for the prediction of EV	90
Table (6.20)	Diagnostic performance of splenic stiffness measured by ARFI for the prediction of EV	91
Table (6.21)	Diagnostic performance of FIB-4 score for the prediction of EV	92
Table (6.22)	Diagnostic performance of RLD/Alb ratio and LOK index for the prediction of EV	93
Table (6.23)	Diagnostic performance of PSR for the prediction of EV	94
Table (6.24)	Combining Liver ARFI and Splenic ARFI in one index	95
Table (6.25)	Parameters combination as a prediction model	95

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure number	Subject	Page
Figure (1.1)	The structure of liver acinus	2
Figure (1.2)	Sinusoidal events during liver fibrosis	5
Figure (1.2)	Hepatic stellate cells activation during liver injury and resolution	9
Figure (2.1)	Display esophageal varices formation	19
Figure (2.2)	Size classification of esophageal varices	25
Figure (2.3)	Classification of gastroesophageal varices	26
Figure (2.4)	Display portal hypertensive gastropathy	27
Figure (3.1)	The shear wave propagation according to the severity of hepatic fibrosis	39
Figure (4.1)	Display methods of strain image	50
Figure (4.2)	Pulse sequence in ARFI Imaging	52
Figure (4.3)	The process of shear wave-based ultrasound elastography	53
Figure (4.5)	ARFI Quantification technical scheme	54
Figure (4.7)	Generation of the supersonic shear source	55
Figure (4.7)	Supersonic shear-wave imaging of a normal and a cirrhotic patient	55
Figure (4.7)	B-mode and ARFI images a metastatic melanoma mass and hepatocellular carcinoma	57
Figure (4.8)	Virtual Touch Tissue Quantification technique in a healthy subject.	59
Figure (4.9)	ElastPQ in a patient with chronic hepatitis.	60

Figure (5.1)	Siemens ACUSON S3000 Ultrasound System	73
Figure (6.1)	ROC curve of RLD for the prediction of EV	82
Figure (6.2)	ROC curve of PVD for the prediction of EV	83
Figure (6.3)	ROC curve of PVFV for the prediction of EV	84
Figure (6.4)	ROC curve of PV CIx for the prediction of EV	85
Figure (6.5)	ROC curve of SD for the prediction of EV	86
Figure (6.6)	ROC curve of SVD for the prediction of EV	87
Figure (6.7)	ROC curve of SVFV for the prediction of EV	88
Figure (6.8)	ROC curve of SV CIx for the prediction of EV	89
Figure (6.9)	ROC curve of liver stiffness measured by ARFI for the prediction of EV	90
Figure (6.10)	ROC curve of splenic stiffness measured by ARFI for the prediction of EV	91
Figure (6.11)	ROC curve of FIB-4 score for the prediction of EV	92
Figure (6.12)	ROC curve of RLD/Alb and LOK index for the prediction of EV	93
Figure (6.13)	ROC curve of PSR for the prediction of EV	94

***INTRODUCTION
AND AIM OF THE WORK***

INTRODUCTION

Chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection represents a worldwide health concern, with 130–170 million chronically infected subjects, whose risk of developing cirrhosis within 20 years is estimated to be around 10% to 20% (*Lavanchy, 2009; Shepard et al., 2005*).

The Egyptian Demographic Health Survey (EDHS), a cross sectional survey including hepatitis C virus (HCV) biomarkers, was conducted in 2008 on a large nationally representative sample, It estimated HCV prevalence among the 15–59 years age group to be 14.7% (*El-Zanaty and Way, 2009*). Accordingly, Egypt has the highest HCV prevalence in the world (*Lavanchy, 2011*).

Today, HCV infection and its complications are among the leading public health challenges in Egypt (*Miller and Abu-Raddad, 2010*).

Portal hypertension (PH) is associated with the most severe complications of cirrhosis, such as ascites, hepatic encephalopathy, and bleeding from esophageal varices (EV). Gastroesophageal varices are present in approximately 50% of patients with liver cirrhosis (*Sanyal et al., 2006*). The most accurate method to evaluate PH is the measurement of the hepatic vein pressure gradient (HVPG). It has been demonstrated that a HVPG value higher than 10 mmHg predicts the presence of EV, while a value higher than 12 mmHg is predictive for variceal bleeding and a high HVPG > 20 mm Hg is associated with continued bleeding and medical therapy failure in acute variceal hemorrhage. However, the evaluation of HVPG is an invasive procedure, which is limited to highly specialized centers and experienced operators (*Bosch et al., 2006; Moitinho et al., 1999*).