

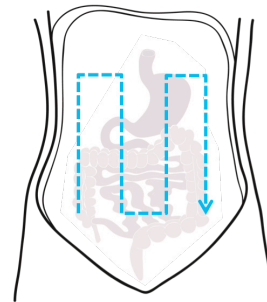
Gastrointestinal applications

DIAGNOSING SMALL BOWEL OBSTRUCTION

Point-of-care ultrasound is an excellent test for small bowel obstruction (SBO). Test performance is far better than an abdominal radiograph.

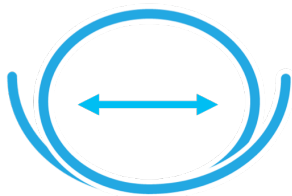
Technique

Point-of-care ultrasound should be used in patients with moderate to high clinical suspicion for SBO. Using a low frequency transducer, perform a systematic examination of the abdomen using a mow the lawn technique. Use gentle pressure to displace bowel gas and assess bowel compressibility.



Findings

There are an array of potential findings



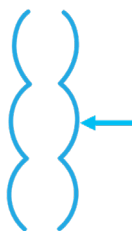
Dilated bowel > 2.5 cm
(This is the most common!)



Free fluid between
bowel loops



Pneumatosis



Noncompressible bowel



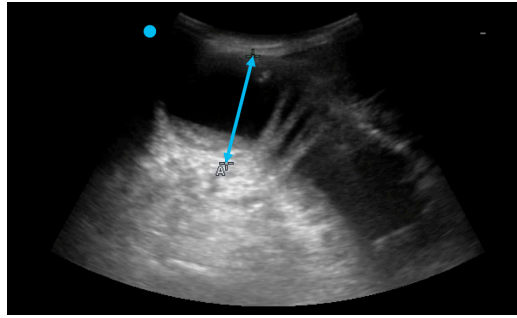
Back and forth movement
of bowel content



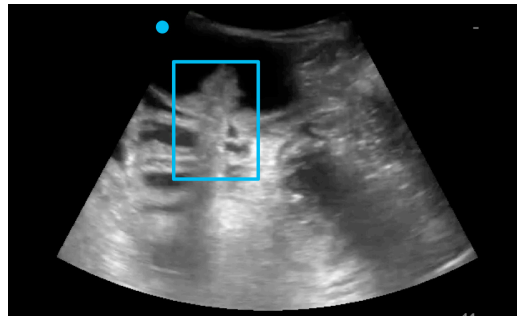
Bowel wall > 3 mm



Loss of peristalsis



Dilated loops of bowel



Wall thickening and free fluid