

Determination of fetal cardiac situs

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Objective

To present an easy and practical way to determine the fetal situs which is easy to apply in all fetuses in whatever position they are in utero.

Methods

We observed all fetuses presenting for antenatal examination at our unit. All fetuses in cephalic position should have the stomach and umbilicoportalvein in clock wise orientation irrespective of whether spine is to the right, left, anterior or posterior. All fetuses in breech position should have these structures in anticlockwise orientation irrespective of whether spine is anterior, posterior, left or right. Similarly if the fetus is in transverse lie, and if the head is to the right, the orientation is clockwise irrespective of the spine position. If the fetus is having its head to the left, then it is anticlock wise.

Results

The clock wise and anti clockwise orientation approach is much simpler to follow as compared to the recommended methods of imagining the examiner himself as the fetus in the womb or by right hand /left hand thumb direction methods.

Conclusion

We recommend to follow the clockwise and anticlock wise method to determine the fetal situs determination as this would help the examiner easily as to where the fetal stomach should be and thereby determine the left side precisely. The situs abnormalities then become an easy exercise instead of being confusing and labourious.