

Value of fetopathological examination following therapeutic termination of pregnancy

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Objective

To present a comprehensive analysis of autopsy findings in 63 fetuses and to assess the clinical utility of fetal autopsy in reaching a final diagnosis, which is essential for counseling regarding the risk of recurrence.

Methods

This is a retrospective descriptive and analytical study conducted on 63 fetuses autopsied following therapeutic termination of pregnancy over the period from January 1st, 2018 to December 30, 2021.

Results

The mean maternal age was 31 years. Consanguinity was found in 16.7% of the cases. All our patients had prenatal ultrasound diagnosis. But only 11.5% of them had a combined first trimester screening and 64.5% had a combined second trimester screening. After fetopathological examination, 40 fetuses (66.7%) had an isolated anomaly or malformation and 20 (33.3%) had a poly malformative syndrome. Ultrasound screening is efficient for the exploration of the fetal brain and its correlation with the fetal autopsy is judged almost perfect. The concordance between fetopathological examination and ultrasound for the study of the central nervous system is judged to be almost perfect ($\kappa=0.82$).

Conclusion

This study confirms the utility of fetal autopsy in identifying the cause of fetal loss, which will help in the genetic counseling of the couple. The antenatal ultrasound screening/fetal autopsy duet seems inseparable, although as much as ultrasound allows an early diagnosis of malformations thus indicating the IMG, the fetopathological examination is the only test that allows a diagnosis of certainty but also allows the searching for other malformations potentially missed by ultrasound.