

CORRESPONDENCE



The lung point, still a sign specific to pneumothorax

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Dear Editor,

The lung point is generally accepted to be pathognomonic for pneumothorax. However, this has been challenged by reporting apparent false-positives cases [1, 2]. While these findings were debunked [3], a recent report once again questioned the specificity of the lung point [4].

We must point that 19 years after its first description, the lung point can still not be mimicked [5]. Remember that the A'-profile is defined as the anterior detection of abolished lung sliding plus A-lines (Fig. 1, Supplementary Video 1). Finding an A'-profile should prompt the search for a lung point to confirm pneumothorax. The lung point is simply but strictly defined as an area where an A'-profile is suddenly replaced by any other pattern (usually lung sliding and/or B-lines) (Fig. 2, Supplementary Video 2) [6].

The video reported by Steenvoorden et al. from an asbestosis patient [4] shows an intercostal space with permanently abolished lung sliding at the left half and permanent lung sliding at the right half. This pattern does not fall within the definition of a lung point. In addition, a B-line is seen at the left half; this directly rules out pneumothorax, as recognized by the authors. These images are nonetheless interesting findings in asbestosis assessment, suggesting regional symphysis. In conclusion, the lung point still remains pathognomonic for pneumothorax.

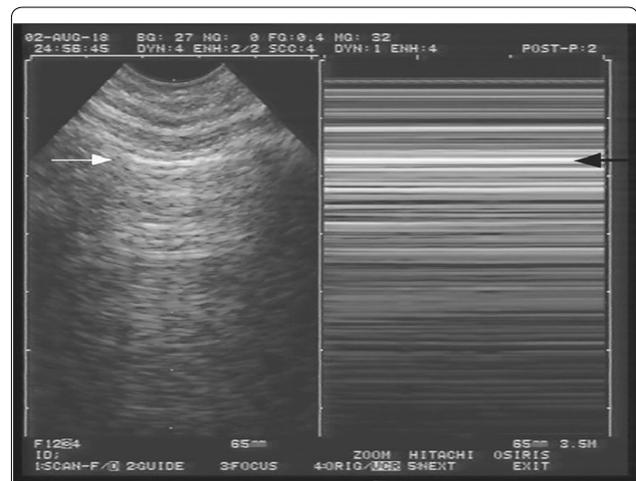


Fig. 1 Anterior chest wall, lower BLUE-point, supine patient, microconvex probe. We clearly observe two signs. One is dynamic: the complete abolition of lung sliding, generating on M-mode (right) the stratosphere sign. Other sign is static: exclusive A-lines (left). The association of these two signs defines, anteriorly, the A'-profile. Note how real-time and M-mode images are finely aligned on this unit, allowing to immediately locate the pleural line on M-mode (arrows)

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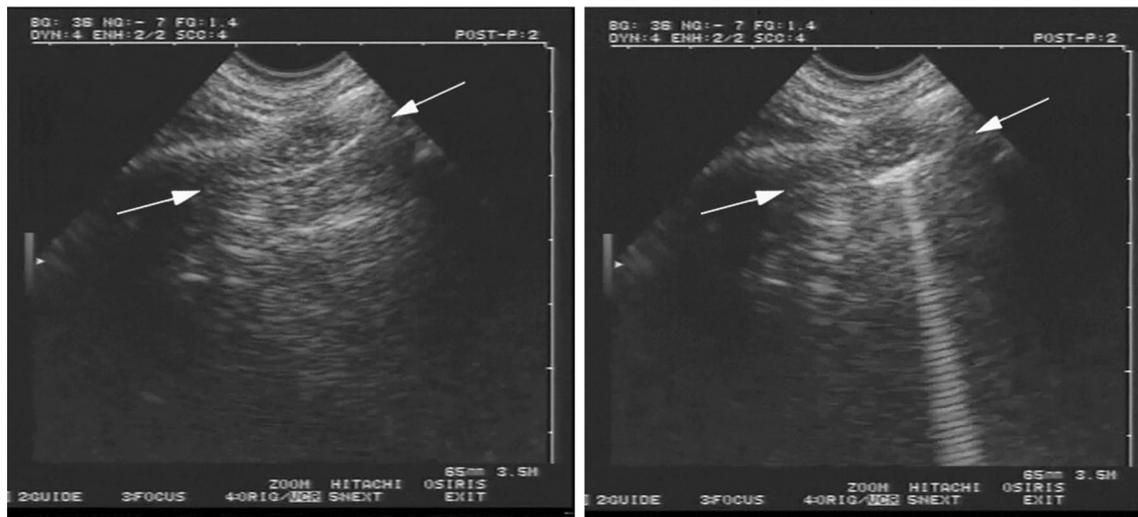


Fig. 2 Lateroposterior chest wall, around the PLAPS-point, supine patient, microconvex probe. An A'-profile is, at this given point, replaced at each inspiration by a lung sliding with B-lines, a usual pattern. Typical appearance of a lung point (arrows: pleural line)

Electronic supplementary material

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflicts of interest

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