

Venetian blind shadowing on ultrasound

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“Venetian blind” shadowing is a type of posterior acoustic artifact described as bands of linear shadows along lines of sight, often diverging on a convex probe [1]. Ironic to its name, it resembles “vertical blinds” rather than the classic horizontal appearance of Venetian window blinds (Figs. 1, 2).

It has classically been described in uterine adenomyosis [2, 3] as heterogeneous myometrial echotexture with regions of increased (heterotopic endometrial tissue) and decreased echogenicity (smooth muscle hyperplasia), associated with intramyometrial hypoechoic radiating linear striations [4] (Fig 3).

Alternatively, it can also be seen in uterine fibroids due to its whorled nature or internal calcifications causing variable absorption of sonographic beams [5] (Fig 4). This makes sonographic differentiation between uterine fibroid and focal adenomyosis difficult. Nevertheless, this finding alongside intramyometrial/suben-



Fig. 1. Venetian blinds, widely adopted as office windows. Photo taken by Dr Leanne Chin.

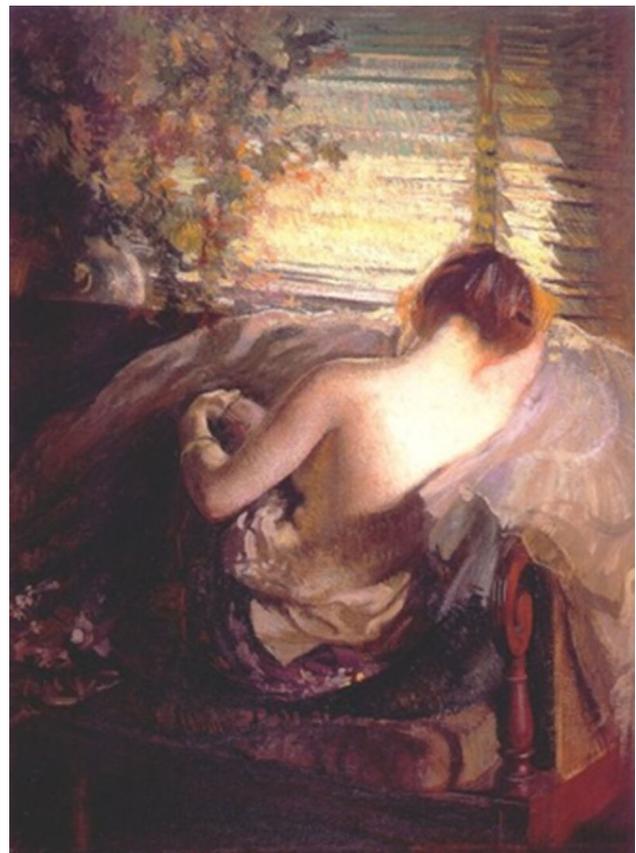


Fig. 2. Fun fact: An iconic painting called “The Venetian Blind” by Edmund Charles Tarbell draws us back to its history since the 18th century. Image available at: <http://bertc.com/subsix/g90/images/tarbell20.jpg>.

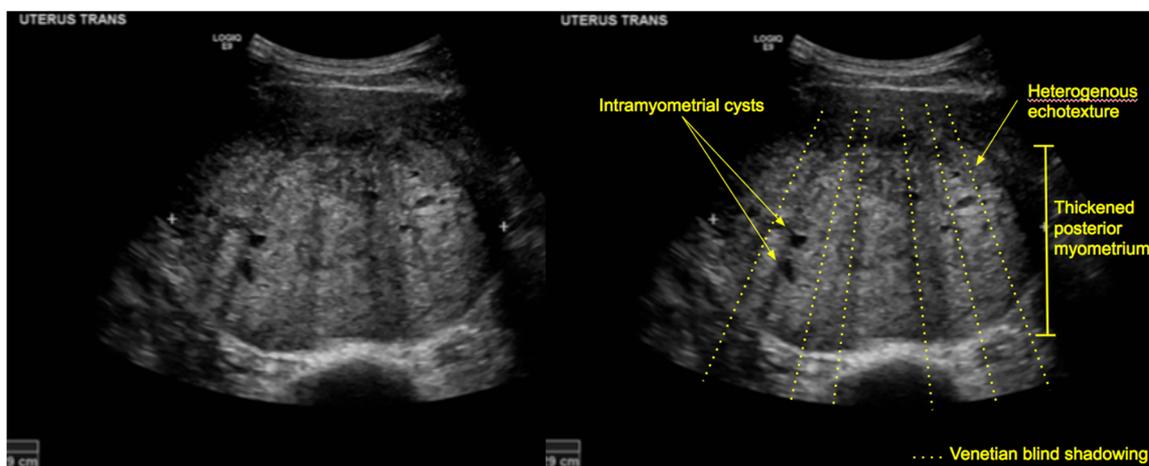


Fig. 3. Transabdominal ultrasound of the uterus in transverse view with annotations showing an asymmetrically enlarged heterogeneous posterior myometrium with Venetian blind shadowing. Note the presence of small intramyometrial cysts.

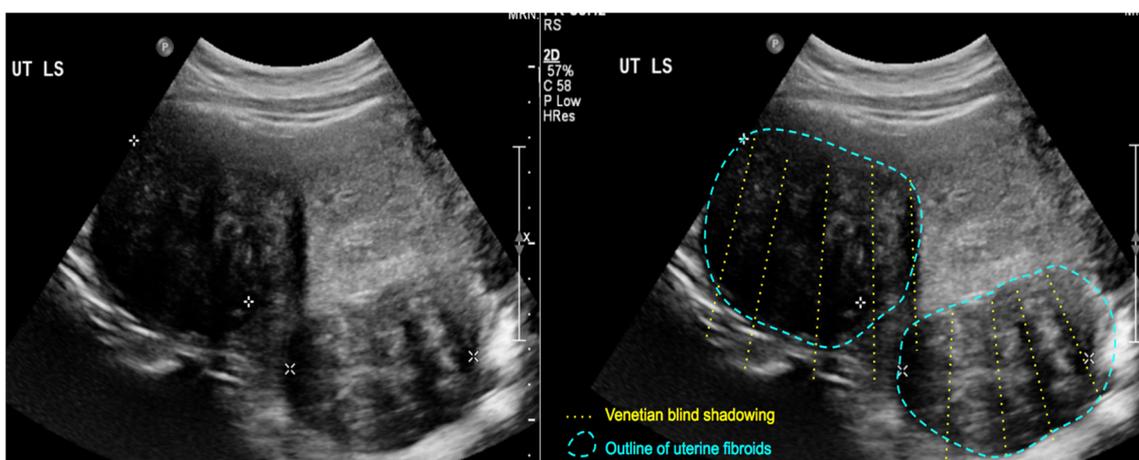


Fig. 4. Two adjacent focal uterine fibroids with different patterns of alternating posterior hypoechoic bands due to variable penetration and transmission of sounds waves.

dometrial cysts allows for high diagnostic sensitivity and specificity for adenomyosis up to 32–63% and 95–97% [6], respectively, in transabdominal scanning.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

Informed Consent Statement of informed consent was not applicable since the manuscript does not contain any patient data.

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