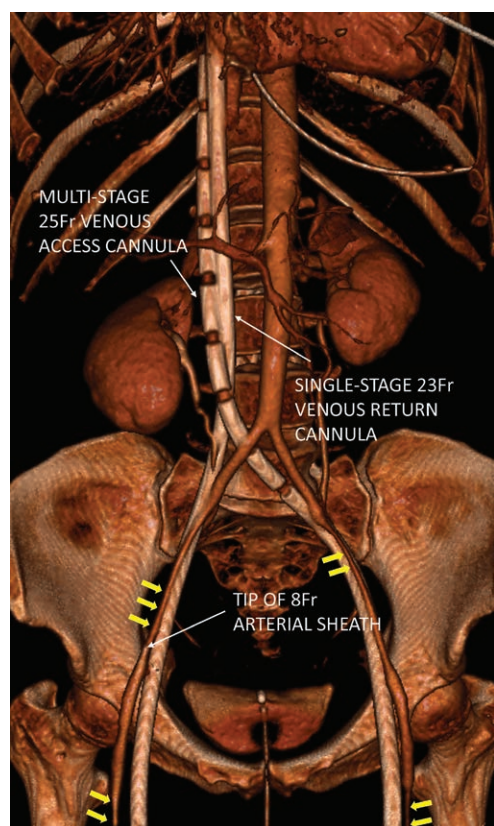


Profound Vasoconstriction

Implications for Percutaneous Arterial Access

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IN the management of severe respiratory failure, veno-venous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation is an increasingly used therapy that presents a unique challenge for anesthesiologists.¹ Veno-arterial-venous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation is emerging as a strategy to treat refractory respiratory failure with coexisting cardiogenic shock.² This image demonstrates profound constrictive effects of high-dose vasopressor therapy on arterial caliber and implications for percutaneous arterial access.

The accompanying computed tomography angiogram demonstrates a patient established on veno-venous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation using a bifemoral percutaneous approach. A 25Fr multistage access cannula and a 23Fr return cannula can be seen ascending the inferior vena cava *via* the left and right femoral veins, respectively, with their tips lying at the cavoatrial junction. An 8Fr arterial sheath was inserted percutaneously *via* the right femoral artery at time of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation cannulation to allow rapid arterial access if circulatory support was required in the form of veno-arterial-venous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation; the tip of the arterial sheath is labeled. At time of image acquisition, the patient was on high-dose vasopressor therapy (norepinephrine 0.8 mcg · kg · min and epinephrine 0.5 mcg · kg · min). Severe vasoconstriction of the femoral and iliac arteries can be seen (yellow arrows) and is present bilaterally.

Anesthesiologists should be aware of the importance of gaining arterial access early in a patient on veno-venous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation with coexistent septic cardiomyopathy. Percutaneous arterial access may be very challenging when a patient is on high-dose vasopressor therapy. This image also demonstrates why distal limb perfusion must be monitored closely for ischemic complications if indwelling arterial devices are *in situ*.³

Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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