

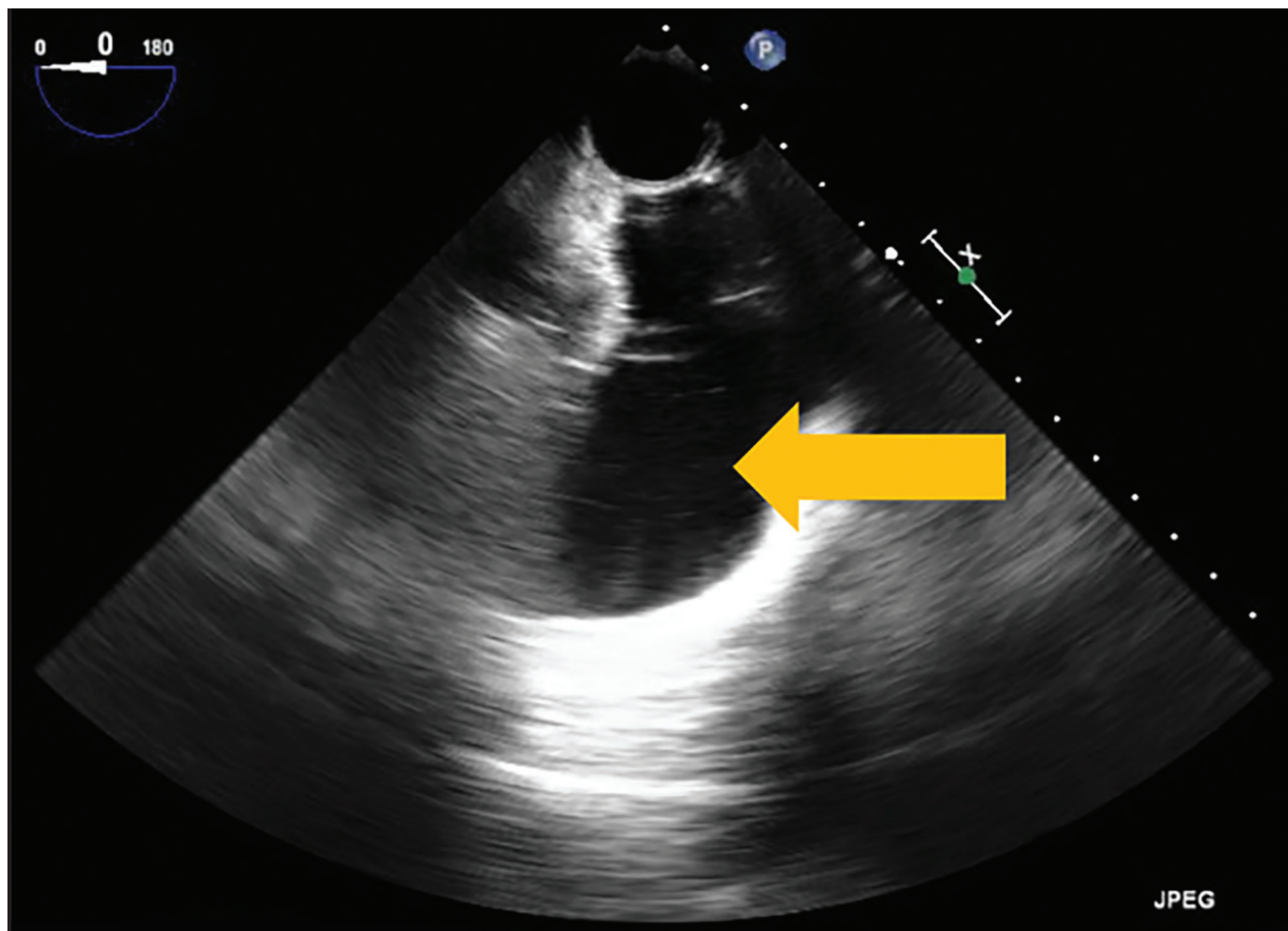
### ACE Question

In the midesophageal descending aorta short-axis view shown here, what is the dark space indicated by the yellow arrow?

- (A) Pleural effusion
- (B) Descending aorta
- (C) Pericardial effusion

The transesophageal echocardiographic (TEE) image shown in Figure 1 is the standard view of the descending aorta in short axis. The dark circle nearest the ultrasound probe is the descending aorta. This view is obtained by rotating the TEE probe to the left from the midesophageal position. The dark space underneath the descending aorta is a left pleural effusion.

Pericardial effusions are represented as dark spaces, but would be seen in the pericardium around the heart (Figure 2). ■



Images courtesy of Johannes W. Steyn, MD.

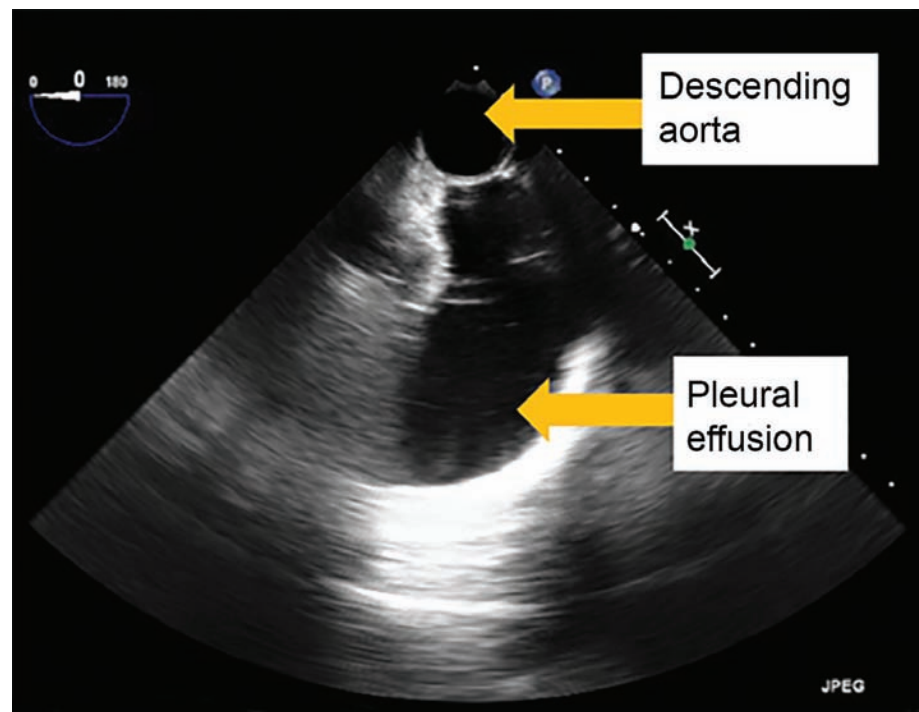


Figure 1: Descending aorta short-axis view.

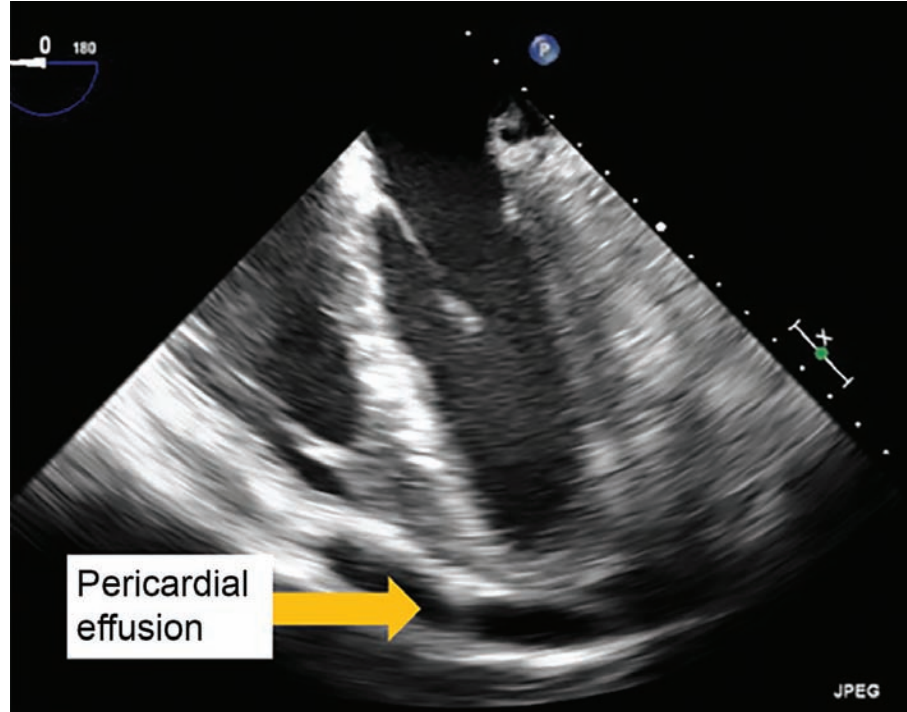


Figure 2: Pericardial effusion.

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### Bibliography:

1. Lang RM, Goldstein SA, Kronzon I, Khandheria BK, Mor-Avi V, eds. *ASE's Comprehensive Echocardiography*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier Saunders; 2016:617-58.
2. Reeves ST, Finley AC, Skubas NJ, et al. Basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography examination: a consensus statement of the American Society of Echocardiography and the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists. *Anesth Analg*. 2013;117(3):543-58.