A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG MINIATURIZED ULTRASOUND PROBES FOR PULMONARY NODULES DETECTION IN AN EX VIVO LUNG PERFUSION MODEL

Niccolo Daddi1, E. Sagrini2, O. Perrone3, M. Lugaressi4, A. Ruffato4, A. Messi4, P. Candoli4, M. Ragusa1, F. Puma1, S. Mattioli3

1Scienze Chirurgiche e Biomediche, S.C. Chirurgia Toracica, Perugia, Italy; 2Department of Medical and Surgical Sciences (dimec), Division of Internal Medicine, Bologna, Italy; 3Department of Medical and Surgical Sciences (dimec), Division of Thoracic Surgery, GVM Care and Research, Bologna, Italy; 4Lugo Hospital, Pneumonology and Respiratory Endoscopy Section, Lugo, Italy

Objectives: Intraoperative localization of small pulmonary nodules with minimally invasive procedures is becoming very important in thoracic surgery. We compare performances of four ultrasound (US) probes, three currently used for thoracic endoscopic diagnostic procedures, in detecting lung nodules in an ex vivo lung setting.

Methods: Two porcine right and left lungs were en bloc procured with heart and trachea in a certified slaughterhouse, 10 minutes after the animal was suppressed. One block was preserved at 4°C for 6 h (Control Group A). One block was perfused on site with a Perfadex solution enriched with tissue plasminogen activator, stored for 6 h at 4°C and subsequently perfused with the Steen solution and ventilated according to the ex vivo lung perfusion (EVLP) protocol (Group B). Four lungs were randomly seeded with four types of targets: waterball; gel; muscle; fat [diameter, number of implants, depth in table]. Four US probes were tested in an open setting after lung collapse: Olympus radial UM-BS20R-3 (20 MHz) [PROBE 1], Olympus radial UM-2R (12 MHz) [PROBE 2], Hitachi convex endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) EB1970UK 2.0 (5-10 MHz) [PROBE 3], Hitachi convex EUP-OL531 (5-10 MHz) [PROBE 4]. US probes were compared in terms of: a) number of nodules localized/not localized; b) US imaging quality based upon the nodule profile and its echogenicity graded according to semiquantitative scales from 0 (poor) to 4 (excellent). Student’s t-test and analysis of variance with post hoc multiple comparisons were utilized with a statistical significance of P < 0.05.

Results: EVLP enhanced US localization of nodules in Group B versus Group A. Differences between US probes were detected for the number of localized nodules (P = 0.006) and US diameter (P = 0.000).

Conclusions: EVLP enhanced US exploration of lung parenchyma in the ex vivo model. Linear probes performed better than radial ones; in the whole, EBUS scope (PROBE3) achieved the best performance and its use for retrieving pulmonary nodules could be studied in a clinical setting.

Disclosure: No significant relationships.