

ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

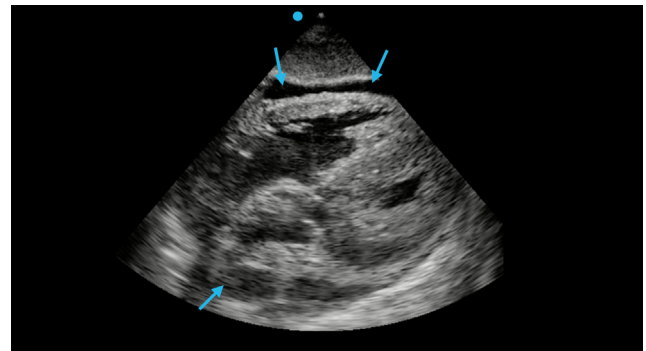
Understanding pericardial effusion

Pericardial effusion

Evaluate for a pericardial effusion and, if present, assess for cardiac tamponade.

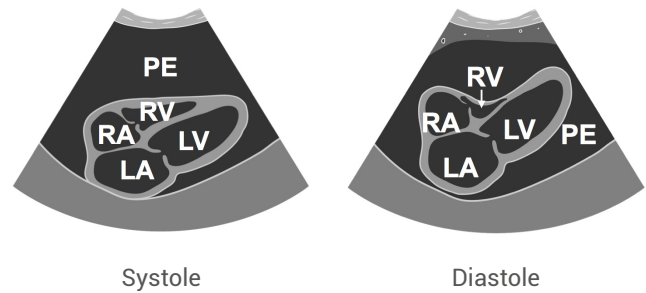
Pericardial effusion

Dark or anechoic fluid that surrounds the heart, circumferentially.



Cardiac tamponade

Defined on ultrasound as right ventricular collapse during diastole.



Pericardial effusion vs. left pleural effusion

At times it is difficult to distinguish a pericardial effusion from a pleural effusion. To easily tell the difference, view the heart in the parasternal long-axis view.

A **pericardial effusion** will ascend over the descending aorta (DA).

A **pleural effusion** will track below the descending aorta (DA).

