

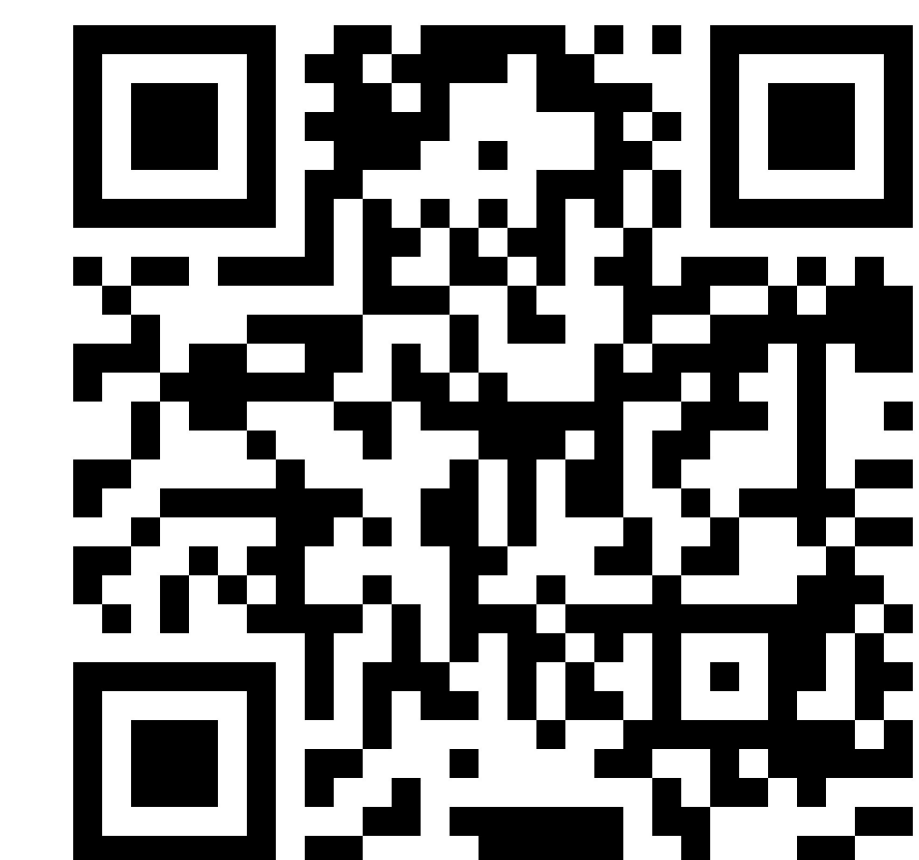
Complete Heart Block Mimicking Seizures in Parturient with Severe Features of Preeclampsia

Hebah Ismail, New York University, NY

Background:

- The management of preeclampsia with severe features (PreE SF) includes magnesium (Mg) boluses and infusions for seizure prophylaxis
- Magnesium toxicity can lead to heart block
- There are case reports of heart block presenting as seizure-like activity¹
- In a parturient with PreE SF on Mg, it can be difficult to distinguish between eclamptic seizures and Mg-induced heart block mimicking seizures

1. Pediatr Neurology 2020, 102:76-77



Complete Heart Block Mimicking Seizures in Parturient with Severe Features of Preeclampsia

Hebah Ismail, New York University, NY

What Happened:

- 37 yo G4P1201 with history of antiphospholipid syndrome on enoxaparin presented at 33 weeks with nausea, vomiting, and sharp abdominal pain
- Upon admission, diagnosed with PreE SF and started on Mg infusion, Mg level therapeutic after 7 hours and infusion discontinued after 9 hours
- Patient noted to feel nauseous and eyes rolled into back of head with shaking arms, thought to be seizure – Mg infusion restarted and labor induced
- Six hours later, labor response code called for 2 more witnessed episodes of “seizures” with emesis and confusion; patient taken to OR for emergency cesarean delivery due to eclampsia
- In OR, patient noted to have episodes of heart block on EKG
- In ICU, 2 more episodes of seizure-like activity with heart block on EKG and no seizure activity on EEG

Complete Heart Block Mimicking Seizures in Parturient with Severe Features of Preeclampsia

Hebah Ismail, New York University, NY

Learning Points:

- With PreE SF, patients are at risk for both eclamptic seizures and heart block from Mg toxicity
- Heart block can present as seizure-like activity, making it difficult to distinguish between eclamptic seizure and Mg-induced heart block mimicking seizures
- Utilizing EKG monitoring on patients with Mg infusions could help in properly diagnosing heart block and preventing the administration of additional Mg if eclamptic seizure is incorrectly diagnosed