

Preoperative pregnancy testing in a University Hospital

Rajendran G., Mohamed A., Ghosh S. □

Cambridge University Hospital NHS, Dept of Anaesthesiology, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Overview

- Anaesthesia and surgery during unidentified pregnancy could result in risks to the mother, fetus or both¹.
- Some patients may require imaging intraoperatively and pregnancy should be ruled out prior to surgery.
- Frequency of incidentally found Preoperative (POp) pregnancy ranges from 0.34% to 2.4%².

Standards□

- RCOA Guidelines³ section 1.11
“It is the responsibility of the healthcare team to determine pregnancy status before surgery”
- NICE recommends POp pregnancy test (PT) should be 'considered' following informed consent for all women of reproductive age group (WRAG) and 'definitely' on those who claim that they could be pregnant⁴.

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Objectives

- To identify if all WRAG were enquired about pregnancy status in the immediate Pop period
- To identify the performance of POp urine PT and incidence of unexpected pregnancy.

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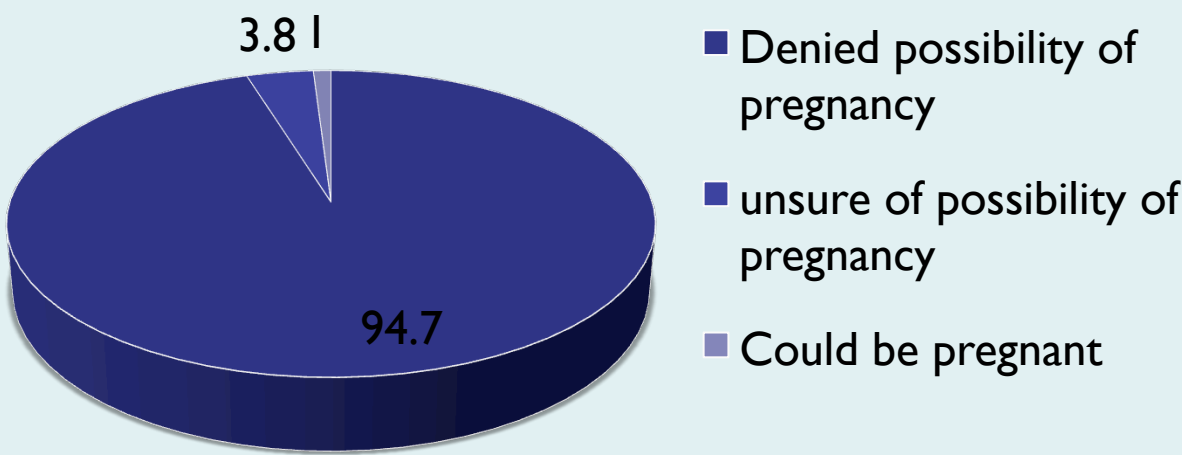
Methods

Theatre database was interrogated to identify WRAG (16-55 years) who underwent non-obstetric procedures at Cambridge University Hospital. Electronic clinical notes were reviewed for a period of 8 weeks.

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Results

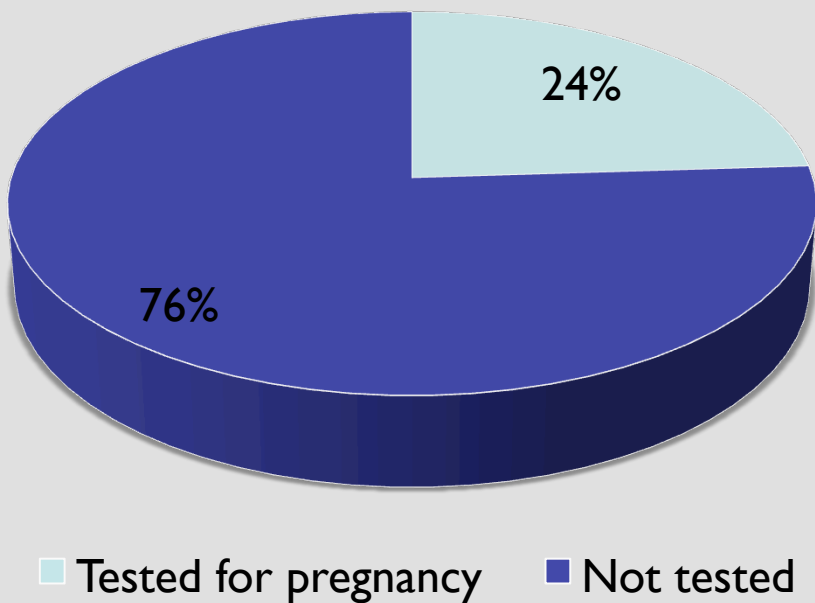
551 patients were identified and 99.6% were enquired on pregnancy status. Whilst 94.7% denied possibility of pregnancy, 3.8% were unsure of possibility of pregnancy and 1% said they could be pregnant.



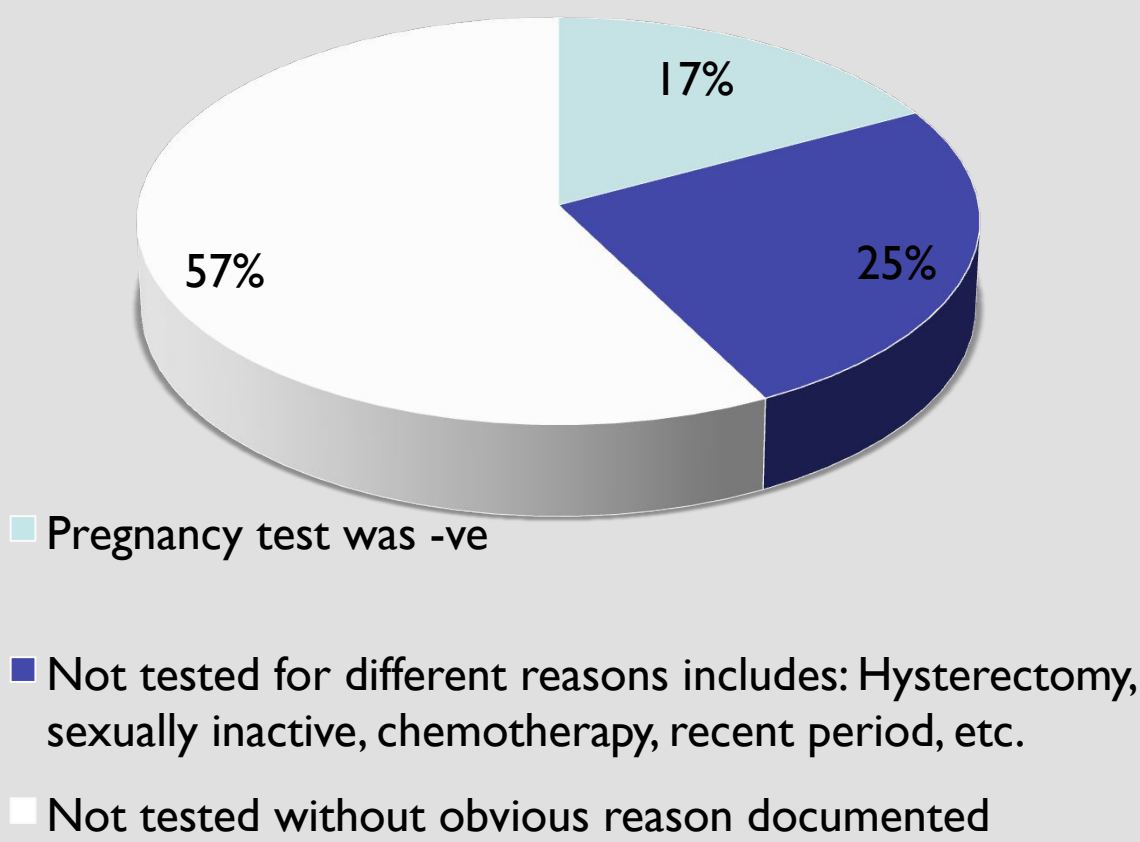
References

- 1.RRR011: Checking pregnancy before surgery. NPSA,London2010□
- 2.Maher et al. Preoperative Pregnancy testing. *Can J Plast Surg.* 2012;20:32-4.□
3. RCoA. Raising the Standard: a compendium of audit recipes. 3rd Edition 2012□
- 4.NICE cg 3: Preoperative Tests. NICE,London2003.

Of 3.8% who were unsure of possibility of pregnancy:



Of 94.7 % who denied the possibility of pregnancy:



Discussion□

- Incidence of positive POpPT in our sample was 0%.
- There were some inconsistencies in checking and documenting POpPT between wards. By presenting this data to staff and rolling out some information leaflets we hope to increase awareness and hence, improve performance.
- Detecting unknown pregnancy could provide an opportunity to discuss and cancel elective surgery or alter perioperative management. This simple but significant test could potentially avoid or reduce harm to both mother and unborn baby.

Limitation of this study: This is a retrospective study on documentation of results and as such fails to detect the actual number of Pregnancy Tests performed but not documented.