The Semi-quantitative Pregnancy Test (SQPT): You don’t know you need it (yet), but you will

Beverly Winikoff
Gynuity Health Projects
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What is a Semi-quantitative Pregnancy Test (SQPT)?

• Identifies hCG using antigen/antibody reaction, like all other pregnancy test
• Does not give a precise concentration of hCG in test liquid
• Does not give only a “yes/no” readout
• Identifies a range in which the precise level falls
What does it look like?
• Efforts to improve medical abortion care and reduce burden of clinic-based follow-up sought

• Alternative follow-up with a semi-quantitative pregnancy test (SQPT) could:
  - Identify ongoing pregnancies at home; allow for “virtual” follow-up for most women (*e.g.* telephone, Internet, etc.)
  - Reduce reliance on ultrasound (and “unnecessary” interventions that often result)
  - Facilitate task-shifting, enabling lower level professionals to manage follow-up
After medical abortion, hCG declines but does not disappear.

Honkanen, et. al
SQPT AS MEDICAL ABORTION F/U

Baseline (Mifepristone day)

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Follow-up (1 to 2 wks later)

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DESCRIPTION OF STUDIES

Two Clinical Studies: U.S., Vietnam
- 490 women seeking medical abortion at 3 facilities in U.S.; 300 women 1 hospital in Vietnam
- Eligible, willing and consenting with gestations < 63 days’ LMP
- All women used test and completed a questionnaire at home on morning of follow-up visit (week 1 in U.S.; week 2 in Vietnam)
- Results of at-home test verified at standard clinic follow-up visit

Randomized Controlled Trial in Vietnam
- 1433 women seeking MA at 4 hospitals
- Eligible, willing and consenting with gestations < 63 days’ LMP
- Randomized to:
  1) standard clinic-based follow-up
  2) alternative phone follow-up using at-home pregnancy test, simple questionnaire
CONCLUSIONS: THE POSSIBILITIES

- Use of SQPTs could substantially reduce clinic follow-up after MA
- Ongoing pregnancy could be identified without clinic follow-up
- Acceptability should be high in all settings
- Programmatic applications would need development
  - Counseling on interpretation of test & development of information sheet for use by low or no-literacy audiences
  - Research to examine appropriate methods to contact women in each setting (phone, internet, text)
- Investment needed to make SQPT widely available at affordable price for integration into medical abortion services globally
Lots of potential uses of SQPT

• To assess successful medical abortion
  – at home follow-up for women
  – Tests show increasing or decreasing levels of hCG; only women not experiencing hCG drop would be asked to return for clinic follow-up

• To assess successful IVF/ART

• To monitor ectopic pregnancy

• As triage test in the ED

• For management of very early surgical terminations
Thank you!