Digital Stethoscope for Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Infectious Disease: Guidelines

The content of this report was up to date on April 9, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

To produce this report, CADTH used a modified approach to the selection, appraisal, and synthesis of the evidence to meet decision-making needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Care has been taken to ensure the information is accurate and complete, but it should be noted that international scientific evidence about COVID-19 is changing and growing rapidly.
Research Question
What are the evidence-based guidelines regarding the use of digital stethoscope for pulmonary auscultation in patients with suspected or confirmed infectious disease?

Key Findings
No relevant evidence-based guidelines were identified regarding the use of digital stethoscope for pulmonary auscultation in patients with suspected or confirmed infectious disease.

Methods
A limited literature search was conducted by an information specialist on key resources including MEDLINE All (1946–) via Ovid, the Cochrane Library, the University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases, the websites of Canadian and major international health technology agencies, as well as a focused internet search. The search strategy was comprised of both controlled vocabulary, such as the National Library of Medicine’s MeSH (Medical Subject Headings), and keywords. The main search concepts were stethoscopes, auscultation, and infection control. No filters were applied to limit the retrieval by study type. Where possible, retrieval was limited to the human population. The search was also limited to English language documents published between January 01, 2015 and April 07, 2020. Internet links were provided, where available.

Selection Criteria
One reviewer screened citations and selected studies based on the inclusion criteria presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Patients of all ages with suspected or confirmed infectious disease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Pulmonary auscultation using digital stethoscope (also known as electronic stethoscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparator</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Recommendations regarding the use of digital stethoscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Designs</td>
<td>Evidence-based guidelines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results
Rapid Response reports are organized so that the higher quality evidence is presented first. Normally, health technology assessment reports and systematic reviews are presented first; however, in reports where guidelines are primarily sought, the aforementioned evidence types are presented in the appendix.

No evidence-based guidelines regarding the use of digital stethoscope for pulmonary auscultation in patients with suspected or confirmed infectious disease.

References of potential interest are provided in the appendix.
Overall Summary of Findings

No relevant evidence-based guidelines or recommendations were found regarding the use of digital stethoscope for pulmonary auscultation in patients with suspected or confirmed infectious disease, therefore no summary can be provided.

References Summarized

Guidelines and Recommendations

No literature identified.
Appendix — Further Information

Non-Randomized Studies

PubMed: PM30310761

PubMed: PM30115828

Clinical Practice Guidelines – Methodology Not Specified

Digital Stethoscope Not Specified - COVID-19 Specific Guidelines


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See: Patient Care Equipment; page 7


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General Infection Control Guidelines

Additional References
