Reviewer's report

Title: Is Fasting a Necessary Preparation for Abdominal Ultrasound?

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Reviewer: Gabriel P Krestin

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the compulsory revisions

a) Discretionary revisions

1. The statement concerning the impact of gastrointestinal gas for accessing abdominal organs made in the Conclusion was not the goal of the study and not supported by the described results. At least for this statement the findings of gas influencing the outcome should have been quantified. Therefore I suggest to eliminate this statement from the Conclusion.

b) Compulsory revisions

1. A better definition of the scoring criteria "excellent" should be included. The authors state that this definition means a quality sufficient for publication, however this is not a generally accepted criteria and should therefore be better explained.

2. The authors describe in the Methods section that all included patients were re-examined in the opposite state the day after the first examination. However, there are no results presented on the outcome of this second examination. It is of high interest to know whether there were any differences compared to the examination performed in the opposite state. These data should be included and discussed. There shall also be stated whether there was agreement between the initial and the repeated exam.

2. The authors should include information about indication to perform the US examination in the 150
patients. It may be a difference in healthy or diseased patients. Moreover, the most important issue in assessing the value of an US exam is whether the pathologic alteration could be visualized. Therefore it is necessary that the authors describe the suspected pathological conditions and whether the diagnosis could be made in both states of fasting.

3. The authors should better explain the large number of drop outs (one third of the patients) and discuss whether this could have altered the results by introducing a selection bias.

**Competing interests:**

None declared.