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# Visualization of the Descending Thoracic Aorta: How CT and MRI Help Us Orient Through the Dizzying Array of TEE

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While transesophageal echocardiography (TEE) of the descending thoracic aorta and the distal aortic arch is often indispensible in visualization of aortic pathology, one of its major limitations is the lack of anatomic markers to orient us in individual TEE images. Even experienced echocardiographers may have difficulty in conveying to the referring physician or a surgeon whether pathologic changes are on the left, right, anterior, posterior, superior or inferior aspect of the aorta. In other words, when imaging the thoracic aorta, echocardiographers lack the sidedness information. The interpretation difficulty stem from the fact that the esophagus through which the TEE probe is travelling spirals around the aorta while the image on the screen of the ultrasound machine does not.

In this presentation, the sidedness information of TEE images will be demonstrated through comparison with the corresponding images on computed tomography and magnetic resonance angiography. In addition, the role of intrinsic markers such as the celiac trunk, azygos vein and great vessels of the neck will be discussed.