

Chest X-ray quiz

Answer and discussion

It is very difficult to see the tip of the IABP, but if you look carefully you will find that it is situated at about T8/9 (arrowed). The optimal position of an intraaortic balloon pump is for the tip of the catheter to be at the level of the inferior margin of the aortic arch on a frontal radiograph. A catheter placed more proximally may impede flow to the head and neck vessels or may directly traumatise the wall of the aorta. Catheters placed more distally in the descending aorta may extend to overlie the origins of the visceral vessels, potentially causing renal or splanchnic ischaemia (Milne, 2007). You would be happy with the placement of the IG tube (arrowed), but not with the CVP line, it is well into the right atrium (arrowed).

Reference

Milne D (2007) Chest Radiography. In D Sidebotham, A McKee, M. Gillham & JH Levy Cardiothoracic Critical Care. Butterworth Heinemann Elsevier

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