

RADIOLOGY: Abdominal Radiograph Examples

These are examples of AXR presentations; they are made-up cases! It is important to be fluent when presenting and these are examples of some of the common pathologies which might arise in a radiology OSCE examination. Sometimes an examiner might want you to give the 'spot diagnosis' eg. 'volvulus', rather than giving a full presentation like the examples below.

Small bowel obstruction

*This is an AP abdominal radiograph of Miss Reid, taken on 1.1.15. It is technically adequate. The main abnormality is prominent, distended loops of bowel, which are centrally located. I can see valvulae conniventes and I suspect this is the small bowel. The soft tissues and bones appear normal and there is no calcification visible. In summary this AXR is suggestive of **small bowel obstruction**, or post-operative ileus.*

Large bowel obstruction

*This is an AP abdominal radiograph of Mr. Khan which was taken two days ago. It is technically adequate. The most striking feature is the dilated bowel in the periphery of the image. I can see haustra, and the diameter appears greater than 6cm. The soft tissues and bones look normal. In summary I think this radiograph shows **large bowel obstruction**, the cause of which may be a bowel malignancy or a diverticular stricture.*

Sigmoid volvulus

*This is an AP abdominal radiograph of Mr. Wilcox taken today. The radiograph is technically adequate. The most striking abnormality is a large dilated loop of bowel, which appears to originate in the left iliac fossa. It has the shape of a coffee bean. The soft tissues and bones appear normal. In summary this radiograph shows the 'coffee bean' sign, which is consistent with **sigmoid volvulus**.*

Fractures and stool!

*This AP abdominal radiograph of Mr. Preston was taken today. The radiograph is not technically adequate because I am unable to see the diaphragm. The bowel is not distended. I can see faecal loading in the right and left colon and rectum. There is swelling of the soft tissues surround the right hip and I note an intra-capsular fracture of the right neck of femur. In summary this radiograph shows a right neck of femur **fracture** and **faecal loading**.*