Society for Vascular Medicine / Society for Vascular Ultrasound (SVM/SVU)
Consensus Statement on Doppler Waveforms

July 15, 2020 – The first consensus-based nomenclature for arterial and venous waveforms has been published online first today in Vascular Medicine (VMJ) and the Journal for Vascular Ultrasound (JVU). This publication reflects a multispecialty collaboration in partnership with the Society for Vascular Medicine (SVM) and the Society for Vascular Ultrasound (SVU), with Writing Committee members nominated by both organizations. This document addresses a significant area of confusion in vascular testing.

According to Dr. Esther Kim, Chair of the Writing Committee and member of the SVM Board of Trustees: “Over a decade ago, the lack of a standardized nomenclature to describe spectral Doppler waveforms was demonstrated to result in confusion amongst ultrasound professionals. Not surprisingly, this can lead to negative clinical outcomes, and the primary intent of this consensus statement is to improve communication amongst all practitioners who care for vascular patients. The Writing Committee was commissioned by the SVM and SVU, representing a logical collaboration between sonographers and interpreting physicians, both critical providers of vascular care.”

In addition to proposed standardized nomenclature, the comprehensive document is rich with examples of waveforms to illustrate use of the standardized terminology and to help implement the findings in clinical practice. The document covers arteries and veins in vascular territories throughout the body including the carotid, peripheral arterial, peripheral venous, renal, and mesenteric circulation.

“The hope of the Writing Committee is that this document will help us all to ‘speak the same language,’ and thereby advance the field of vascular ultrasound and improve patient care,” says Dr. Kim.

The document has been endorsed by both SVM and SVU, and both organizations are committed to disseminate its findings. Comments from both societies are below.

Kelly Byrnes, President of SVU: “Sonographers have long been proponents for standardizing Doppler waveform nomenclature, with Bob Scissons being among the earliest and most vocal standard-bearers. The characterization of waveforms is basic to the diagnosis of vascular disease, and there have been more than a few spirited debates on the topic! It is extremely gratifying to see the fruits of this years-long collaboration between SVU and SVM result in this much-needed Consensus Statement. We owe a great deal of thanks to the Writing Committee for this substantial contribution to the profession.”

Dr. Raghu Kolluri, President of SVM: “This Consensus Statement helps vascular specialists better communicate and seeks to mitigate discordance in the terminology of the Doppler waveform...a combined effort of the sonographers performing the tests and interpreting vascular physicians is the best approach to improve communication amongst caregivers. So, SVM-SVU collaboration makes perfect sense. We hope that this new Doppler waveform nomenclature will eliminate confusion and lead to appropriate diagnosis and better patient care.”
The document is designed for immediate implementation in vascular labs and for educational purposes. The article is free to download for a limited time.


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About the Society for Vascular Medicine (SVM)

The Society for Vascular Medicine is a professional organization that was founded in 1989. The Society recognizes the importance of individuals with diverse backgrounds and from multiple specialties to achieve its mission to promote and advance the discipline of vascular medicine and the care of patients with vascular disease.

Visit vascularmed.org.

About the Society for Vascular Ultrasound (SVU)

The Society for Vascular Ultrasound is the professional society of the Vascular Laboratory. Our members are dedicated to the advancement of noninvasive technology (ultrasound) used in the diagnosis of vascular disease.

Visit SVU.org.

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