

Imaging in intussusception

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A plain abdominal field usually reveals evidence of small or large bowel obstruction with an absent caecal gas shadow in A barium enema may be used to diagnose the presence of an ileocolic intussusception but does not demonstrate small bowel intussusception. Abdominal ultrasonography has a high diagnostic sensitivity in children, demonstrating the typical doughnut appearance of concentric rings in transverse section. CT scanning is currently considered the most sensitive radiological method to confirm intussusception, with a reported diagnostic accuracy of 58-100%. The characteristic features of CT scan include a 'target'- or 'sausage'-shaped soft-tissue mass with a layering effect (Figure 78.6); mesenteric vessels within the bowel lumen are also typical.

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