Correspondence

Echocardiographic dimensions

Sir,
The terms used to describe echocardiographic displays give food for thought. M-mode display is usually distinguished from the more recently developed formats which more readily show anatomical structure. The latter tend to be described as either “two dimensional” or “cross-sectional”. Neither is perfect to distinguish this display from M-mode, because the M-mode technique also displays cross-sectional anatomy. It does so in at least the two dimensions of length and breadth, the breadth representing the dimension of time. What is certain is that it is incorrect, as Veyrat and her colleagues do in the June issue, to describe M-mode echocardiography as “one dimensional”. I am told that it is not possible for anything to exist in only one dimension. If one uses the term “two dimensional” to describe the more obviously cross-sectional format, there is the immediate temptation to contrast the M-mode technique as “one dimensional”. Might I suggest it would be good general editorial policy to avoid references to dimension and to distinguish the different displays as “M-mode” and “cross-sectional”, respectively.

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Reference