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Subacute Myocardial Rupture Evident on Echocardiogram

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Figure 1: Top: 2-Dimensional echocardiogram subcostal view showing pericardial tamponade. Bottom: Color Doppler 2 chambers view showing the large pericardial effusion and color flow between the left ventricular cavity and the pericardial fluid (arrows). *Abbreviations:* LV = left ventricle; pe = pericardial effusion; RA = right atrium; RV = right ventricle.

A 66-year-old man admitted for a non-ST elevation myocardial infarction had a significant stenosis of the circumflex coronary artery which required a stent. Later, he developed symptoms of pericardial tamponade, confirmed by transthoracic echocardiography. Color Doppler revealed the presence of a communication between the left ventricular and pericardial cavities (Figure 1). Instead of performing pericardiocentesis, taking the possible risk of precipitating complete myocardial rupture, an emergent pericardial window was performed. During surgery, a considerable amount of blood was removed from the pericardial cavity, and a small myocardial rupture was confirmed. The patient was then discharged in a stable condition.