Jaundice

Jaundice is a medical condition that causes yellowing of the skin or the whites of the eyes because of extra amounts of the pigment bilirubin. The most common causes are hepatitis, alcoholic liver disease, blockage of the common bile duct by a gallstone (https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/gallstones) or tumor, or toxic reaction to a drug or medicinal herb.

Imaging examinations may be used to help diagnose jaundice, in addition to physical examination and laboratory tests.

In cases in which there are no known causes for jaundice, the usually appropriate initial imaging test is ultrasound (US) abdomen (https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/abdominus) , CT abdomen (https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/abdominct) with intravenous (IV) contrast, or an MRI abdomen (https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/mri-abdomen-pelvis) without and with IV contrast with magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography (https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/mrcp) (MRCP; a special type of MRI that shows the liver, pancreas, bile ducts, and gallbladder). MRI abdomen without IV contrast with MRCP may be appropriate.

In cases in which a blockage of the bile duct is thought to be the cause, CT abdomen with IV contrast, MRI abdomen without and with IV contrast with MRCP, MRI abdomen without IV contrast with MRCP, or US abdomen is usually appropriate. Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP; an invasive test using an endoscope to take x-rays) and US abdomen endoscopic (an invasive US done with an endoscope under general anesthesia) may be appropriate.

In cases in which the cause is thought to be a medical condition and not a blockage, MRI abdomen without and with IV contrast with MRCP, CT abdomen with IV contrast, or US abdomen is usually appropriate.

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