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Prognostic value of non-ischemic ring-like left ventricular scar pattern in patients with apparently idiopathic ventricular arrhythmias: a CMR imaging study

Authors:
D Muser1, P Santangeli1, S Castro1, R Casado Arroyo2, S Maeda3, D Benhayon4, I Liuba5, J Liang1, M Sadek6, A Chahal1, S Magnani7, F Garcia1, F Marchlinski1, J Selvanayagam8, G Nucifora9, 1University of Pennsylvania - Philadelphia - United States of America, 2Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) - Brussels - Belgium, 3Tokyo Medical And Dental University - Tokyo - Japan, 4Memorial Healthcare System, Electrophysiology - Miami - United States of America, 5Linkoping University Hospital - Linkoping - Sweden, 6University of Ottawa Heart Institute - Ottawa - Canada, 7New York University Langone Medical Center - New York - United States of America, 8Flinders Medical Centre and Flinders University - Adelaide - Australia, 9University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust - Manchester - United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland,

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Background: The presence of left ventricular (LV) late gadolinium enhancement (LGE) at cardiac magnetic resonance (CMR) has been correlated to life-threatening arrhythmic events in patients with apparently idiopathic ventricular arrhythmias (VAs).

Objective: We investigated the prognostic significance of a specific LV-LGE phenotype characterized by a subepicardial/midmyocardial "ring-like" pattern of fibrosis.

Methods: Out of a total of 518 consecutive patients with apparently idiopathic VAs who underwent CMR study, 79 (15%) had evidence of LV-LGE. Of these, 23 (4%) patients had LV LGE with ring-like pattern, defined as subepicardial or midmyocardial LGE involving at least 3 contiguous segments in the same slice (group A), and 56 (11%) patients had LV LGE with no ring-like pattern (group B). The remaining 439 patients had no LGE (group C). The end-point of the study was a composite SCD, resuscitated cardiac arrest and nonfatal episodes of ventricular fibrillation or documented sustained ventricular tachycardia.

Results: Group A patients were more frequently males compared to groups B and C (96% vs. 79% vs. 52%; p<0.01) and had more frequently a family history of SCD and/or cardiomyopathy (30% vs. 11% vs. 5%; p<0.01). All patients in Group A showed VAs with a predominant RBBB morphology vs. 38 (68%) patients in Group B and 65 (15%) in Group C (p<0.01). During a follow-up of 63±39 months, the composite outcome occurred in 13 patients (57%) in Group A vs. 11 (20%) in Group B and 2 (1%) in Group C (p<0.01).

Conclusion: In patients with apparently idiopathic VAs, a nonischemic LV-LGE with a ring-like pattern at CMR is associated with a high rate of malignant arrhythmic events during follow-up.
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