A comparison of different risk stratification strategies for sudden cardiac death in pediatric hypertrophic cardiomyopathy


Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Queen Silvia Childrens Hospital, Sahlgrenska Academy
Gothenburg, Sweden (1)
Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Astrid Lindgren Childrens Hospital, Karolinska Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden (2)
Unit of Pediatrics, Department of Clinical Sciences, Umeå University Hospital, Umeå, Sweden (3)
Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Uppsala University Childrens Hospital, Uppsala, Sweden (4)
Department of Pediatrics, Linköping University Hospital, Linköping, Sweden (5)

INTRODUCTION  Studies on pediatric patients with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) have failed to confirm that risk-factors for sudden death considered important in American Heart Association (AHA) 2011 risk-stratification guidelines, the only ones recognized for patients <16 yrs of age, are significant predictors in childhood-HCM, with the exception of ventricular tachycardia (VT).

METHODS  A national Swedish cohort of patients with a diagnosis of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) presenting <19 years of age contains 140 patients, follow-up of 10.9 (SD±9.0) yrs, with both ECG- and wall thickness measurements, data on syncope, and family history of sudden death (FHSCD). 129 have had 24h Holter-ECG or equivalent monitoring. There were 27/140 sudden deaths/cardiac arrests (SD/CA) in the total group and 21/129 in the latter group. The ability to predict SD/CA for proposed risk predictors was studied with ROC-curve analysis.

RESULTS Analyzed as continuous function in the ECG-monitored group the number of “major” AHA risk-factors (FHSCD, max wall thickness ≥3cm, unexplained syncope) had area under the curve (AUC) 0.53 [0.39-0.67, p=0.66]. Using AHA2011 criteria and incorporating presence of VT and/or abnormal BP-response to exercise if other major risk factor present, improves AUC only to 0.56 [p=0.40], but expressing max wall thickness as Detroit Z-score with a cut-off at ≥6 instead of ≥3cm improves AUC to 0.64 [0.51-0.77, p=0.042]. Examining individual AHA-risk factors, neither FHSCD (p=0.64), or pathological BP-response on exercise (p=0.20) were significant, whereas VT on Holter had AUC=0.79 [0.63-0.86, p<0.001]. A pediatric modification of scoring using only max wall thickness Detroit score ≥6, VT on Holter and unexplained syncope as risk factors improved AUC further to 0.80 [0.69-0.91, p<0.001]. In the same population, both ECG-risk score >5 points AUC=0.87 [0.80-0.93, p<0.001], last Detroit Z-score ≥4.5 AUC=0.80 [0.70-0.89, p<0.001], and as continuous functions: ECG risk score AUC=0.90 [0.85-0.95, p<0.001] and last Z-score AUC=0.86 [0.78-0.93 p<0.001], performs better as risk predictors. ROC-curves in total group gave virtually identical values.

CONCLUSIONS “Major” risk-factors stated in AHA 2011-guidelines have too low sensitivity and specificity in pediatric HCM-patients, and risk-stratification based on ECG-phenotype is more effective. There is a need for the development of a pediatric risk calculator based on childhood risk-factors and including ECG-phenotype.