Letters to the Editors

Acute cardiac valvular involvement in Kawasaki disease

Sirs,

Kawasaki disease (KD), a systemic childhood vasculitis, represents the leading cause of acquired heart disease in children in developed countries. Coronary aneurysms are the most known and severe complications, with a reported incidence of about 5% in timely treated patients (1). However, not only can coronary vessels be involved by inflammation, but also the whole heart tissue, determining myocarditis, pericarditis, and rarer valvular involvement (1), described in inflammation, but also the whole heart tissue, determining myocarditis, pericarditis, and valvular involvement (1), described in

In our study, we evaluated the incidence of heart involvement in a cohort of patients affected by KD, with particular attention to echocardiographic evaluation (performed between the second and the fourth week from onset) consistent with coronaryitis, pericarditis, myocarditis and valvular involvement. Charts of all patients affected by KD and referred to our hospital (Institute of Child Health IRCCS Burlo Garofolo, University of Trieste) from 1988 to 2009 were reviewed. Medical records from onset to the end of follow-up were collected. Our population consisted of 45 patients (29 males, 16 females); the median age at diagnosis was 4.5 months (SD 5.7 months).

In conclusion, despite the small number of patients, our study reports a relatively high frequency of valvular involvement in KD (18%), never found before. It was associated with other cardiac manifestations, or found isolated and completely asymptomatic. We would like to underline that valvular involvement in KD seems to be a benign condition, which resolves itself completely in all patients. These findings need to be confirmed by further studies.

M.C. PELLEGRIN, MD
A. TADDIO, MD
L. LEPORE, MD
Department of Pediatrics, Institute of Child Health, IRCCS Burlo Garofolo, University of Trieste, Italy.

Address correspondence to: Dr M.C. Pellegrin,
Department of Pediatrics, Institute of Child Health, IRCCS Burlo Garofolo, University of Trieste, Via dell’Istria 65/1, 34127 Trieste, Italy.
E-mail: mariachiara.pellegrin@gmail.com
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References