Gerbode Type Defect in Adults after Repair of Tetralogy of Fallot

Yalonetsky, Sergey1; Avraham, Lorber2; Wald, Rachel3; Oechslin, Erwin3
1Rambam Healthcare Campus, Cardiology, Haifa, Israel; 2Rambam Healthcare Campus, Pediatric Cardiology & GUCH, Haifa, Israel; 3Toronto General Hospital, UHN, Congenital Cardiac Centre for Adults, Toronto, Canada

Background: Left ventricular (LV) to right atrial (RA) communications can be congenital or acquired. They are well known in patients with repaired atrio-ventricular septal defect and are increasingly recognized in adults with acquired heart disease. LV to RA communications or Gerbode-type defects (GD) are poorly recognized in adults with tetralogy of Fallot (TOF).

Objective: The objective was to assess the prevalence and the clinical features of the GD in a contemporary cohort of adults with repaired TOF.

Methods: Adults (≥ age 18 years) with repaired TOF, actively followed at the Toronto Congenital Cardiac Center for Adults (n=502) and at the Congenital Cardiac Clinic, Rambam Medical Centre Haifa, Israel (n=24) were included. Their charts were reviewed for the diagnosis of a GD and acquisition of the anatomic features and surgical details.

Results: A GD was identified in 9 of 526 (1.7%) patients. The GD was adjacent to the ventricular septal defect (VSD) patch and was not hemodynamically relevant in all patients. Though present for many years or since surgical repair, the GD was diagnosed late after TOF repair and misinterpreted as high velocity jet of tricuspid regurgitation, which lead to the incorrect diagnosis of an elevated right ventricular systolic pressure.

Conclusions: The presence of a Gerbode-type defect is a rare complication in adults with repaired TOF. Detection of a GD is a diagnostic challenge and a potential source of misinterpretation, which results in misdiagnoses.