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**Echocardiographic changes and growth retardation in a group of Egyptian children with rheumatic heart disease****Omar Hosni Dwidar**

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**Background:** Advances in echocardiographic studies have identified a massive burden of rheumatic heart disease (RHD) which continues to be a major health hazard in most developing countries. The aim of the paper was to investigate the correlation between cardiac affection as regards the presence of single or multiple valvular lesions, and their severity and the growth parameters in a group of Egyptian children with rheumatic heart disease.

**Methods:** This study is a cross-sectional study, that was conducted on 200 children with rheumatic heart disease and 400 age-matched healthy children. All subjects were subjected to anthropometric measurement and echocardiographic evaluation of the different cardiac parameters.

**Results:** Isolated mitral incompetence was the most frequent type of valvular lesion in rheumatic heart disease (54.0%), followed by mixed mitral incompetence and aortic incompetence (26.5%). Patients with rheumatic heart disease were more liable to be underweight and stunted compared to controls ( $p<0.05$ ). Growth retardation was significantly noticed in patients with rheumatic heart disease in general ( $p<0.05$ ), and particularly in patients mixed mitral incompetence and aortic incompetence in particular ( $p<0.05$ ). Also a significant association was detected between growth retardation and the severity of the valvular lesion in the group of rheumatic heart patients ( $p<0.05$ ).

**Conclusions:** Associations between growth retardation and rheumatic heart disease with its various patterns of valvular affection and severity were detected in the present study

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