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Commentary

A Brief Description of Acute and Chronic Inflammatory Cardiomyopathy

Annie Feng*

Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Department of Surgery, Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA

ABOUT THE STUDY

Myocarditis is a heart muscle inflammation (myocardium). Inflammation can impair the heart's capacity to pump blood, resulting in fast or irregular heartbeats (arrhythmias). Myocarditis is mainly caused by a viral infection. Myocarditis can occur as a result of a medication response or as part of a larger inflammatory illness. Chest discomfort, exhaustion, shortness of breath, and fast or irregular heartbeats are all signs and symptoms of myocarditis. Severe myocarditis causes the heart to weaken, resulting in insufficient blood flow to the rest of the body. Clots in the heart can cause a stroke or a heart attack. Due to the emergence of cardiac magnetic resonance imaging, the diagnosis of myocarditis has evolved. The study presents an expert consensus document aiming at summarizing common myocarditis terminology while also noting certain areas of ambiguity and uncertainty, as well as unmet therapeutic requirements. In reality, the processes that define the shift from the initial trigger to myocardial inflammation and from acute myocardial injury to chronic ventricular dysfunction are still a source of debate. It's still unclear if viruses (other than enteroviruses) induce direct tissue damage, operate as immune-mediated harm triggers, or do both. In terms of nomenclature, myocarditis can be classified based on the origin, stage, and severity of the disease, as well as the most common symptoms and pathological findings. Acute Myocarditis (AM) is defined as a short period of time between the beginning of symptoms and diagnosis (usually less than one month). Chronic inflammatory cardiomyopathy, on the other hand, is defined as cardiac inflammation with established dilated cardiomyopathy or hypokinetic nondilated phenotype, which progresses to fibrosis without apparent inflammation in later stages. Given the absence of well-designed modern clinical research in the field, suggested diagnostic and therapy guidelines for AM and chronic inflammatory cardiomyopathy are mostly based on expert opinion. The study presents a common and practical approach to patient diagnosis and care, highlighting the contrasts between European and American scientific pronouncements on the subject. The relevance of histology in defining subtypes of myocarditis, as well as its prognostic and therapeutic implications, is discussed. Whereas chronic inflammatory cardiomyopathy (infl-CMP) is defined as myocardial inflammation with established DCM or hypokinetic nondilated phenotype and a longer period of symptoms (generally more than one month). Myocarditis can be characterised as eosinophilic, lymphocytic, giant cells, or granulomatous depending on the cell types that infiltrate. In individuals with persistent myocardial inflammation, chronic myocarditis might be a stage in between AM and chronic infl-CMP. Over the last several decades, definitions associated with myocarditis have altered due to shifting diagnostic criteria and variances in the medical community's conceptual understanding and interpretation of myocarditis.

AM: Echocardiography

The routine assessment of patients with a suspected acute cardiac disease includes echocardiography, which can reveal a wide range of abnormalities. Even if the LVEF is normal, increased wall thickness, mild segmental hypokinesia, especially in the inferior and inferolateral walls, diastolic dysfunction, abnormal tissue doppler imaging, mild right ventricular dysfunction, pericardial effusion, and abnormal myocardial echogenicity can all point to AM. Even when LVEF is low or extremely low, LV dimensions are often normal in the early stages, which can lead to substantial stroke volume reduction and tachycardia. The LVEF at the time of admission is a significant predictive indicator. Furthermore, cardiac function can change quickly during AM, either naturally or as a result of therapy.

Correspondence to: Annie Feng, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Department of Surgery, Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA, E-mail: Annie_Feng @harvard.edu

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