

Pericarditis (internal)

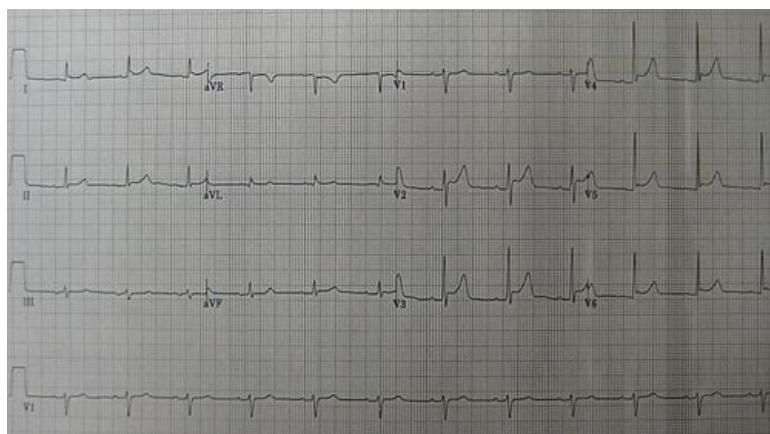
This article discusses internal diseases. Pathology is discussed in the article *Pericarditis (pathology)*.

Pericarditis is an inflammatory disease of the pericardium.

- It occurs either as **acute inflammation with effusion** (this is accompanied by a risk for cardiac tamponade) or as a **chronic inflammation with pericardial fibrosis**, leading to constrictive pericarditis.
- Usually, it is **part of a systemic disease**. For this reason, affected individuals must be monitored for a long time even after the pericarditis has diminished.

Acute pericarditis

- 2 forms:
 1. **Dry, fibrinous** - chest pain, pericardial friction murmur, ECG changes (typical pericardial changes of the ST segment and T wave)
 2. **Exudative** - effusion (diagnosed using echocardiography)^[1]
- Often takes place without clinical manifestations
- **Etiology**: most often viral, but tumor involvement must always be excluded.
- **Therapy**: symptomatic, according to etiology. Sometimes, antibiotics or corticoids are necessary.
- The prognosis is favorable.
- If there is a large effusion, a cardiac tamponade can ensue (symptoms and signs include shortness of breath, low cardiac output, paradoxical pulse, weakened pulse, dilatation of the heart shadow on chest X-ray).
- One must consider the possibility of effusion in the pericardium in the first month after a heart operation.



ECG changes in pericarditis: elevation of the ST segment in the chest leads and depression of the ST segment in the aVR lead.

Etiology

- **Idiopathic**
- **Infectious**: viruses (coxsackie viruses, EBV, hepatitis B virus, HIV, cytomegalovirus), bacteria (pneumococci, staphylococci, streptococci)
- **Acute myocardial infarction** (pericarditis epistenocardiaca above the lesion)
- **Uremia**
- **Cancer** (lung cancer, breast cancer, leukemia,...)
- **Autoimmune diseases**
- **Sarcoidosis, intestinal inflammation, amyloidosis**
- **Drug** (hydralazine, procainamide, isoniazid, diphenylhydantoin)
- **Post-traumatic**: chest trauma (hemopericardium)
- **Postoperative**: postpericardiectomy syndrome
- **Myxedema**
- **Chylopericardium**^[1]

Constrictive pericarditis (*pericarditis constrictiva*)

- **Definition**: a chronic condition in which a rigid pericardium barrier impedes normal filling of the heart with blood.^[1]
- **Consequences**: decreased cardiac output and marked blood congestion in the liver.
- **Clinical picture**: shortness of breath, fatigue, and later on edema of the lower limbs, ascites, anorexia, weight loss, and dyspepsia^[1]
- In children it is very rare. In the past, it often was an inflammatory complication of TB.
- It is very difficult to distinguish this condition from restrictive CM.

Links

Related Articles

- Infectious endocarditis
- Myocarditis
- Pericarditis (pathology)

- Pericarditis (pediatrics)

External links

- Perikarditída (TECHmED) (<https://www.techmed.sk/perikarditida/>)

Source

- BENEŠ, Jiří. *Studijní materiály* [online]. ©2007. [cit. 2010]. <<http://jirben.wz.cz>>.

Reference

1. KLENER, Pavel, et al. *Internal Medicine*. 3rd edition. Prague: Galén, 2006. p. 303. ISBN 80-7262-430-X .