Letters to the Editor

Hypocalcemic Heart Failure: A Reversible Form of Heart Muscle Disease

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To the Editor:

I read with interest the case reported by Suzuki *et al.*¹ Hypocalcemic cardiomyopathy has been reported from Japan,¹ Syria,² China,³ India,⁴ France,⁵ Germany,⁶ Portugal,⁷ Spain,⁸ Israel,⁹ Hungary,¹⁰ and the United Kingdom.¹¹ It is, therefore, a worldwide problem.

Until 1980,² only occasional cases of hypocalcemic cardiomyopathy had been described, mostly in the pediatric literature. A potential contribution of hypocalcemia to congestive heart failure should be sought in every case of cardiomyopathy, regardless of patient's age. Furthermore, it should be considered in the differential diagnosis among all patients with the reversible cardiomyopathic syndromes.

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Author's reply:

We very much appreciate the interest of Cheng in our case report on hypocalcemic heart failure.¹ Several cases of congestive heart failure associated with hypocalcemia have been described previously, but these involved infants or adults with other cardiac diseases compromising myocardial performance.^{2–4} Recently, however, cases including those reported by Cheng *et al.* without history of preexisting cardiac diseases have been reported.^{1, 5–7} Cardiac arrhythmias as a clinical manifestation of hypocalcemia have also been reported.⁸

As pointed out by Cheng, hypocalcemia as a cause of cardiac dysfunction is overlooked. In patients with unexplained or refractory heart failure, the possibility of unrecognized hypocalcemia as a contributing factor should be considered in diagnostic and therapeutic programs.

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