EVALUATION OF PALPITATIONS

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PALPITATIONS

• DESCRIBED BY PATIENTS AS A DISAGREEABLE SENSATION OF PULSATION OR MOVEMENT WITHIN THE CHEST AND/OR ADJACENT AREAS

• SENSATION OF UNPLEASANTNESS WHICH MAYBE ASSOCIATED WITH DISCOMFORT, ALARM, AND LESS COMMONLY PAIN.
PREVALENCE

• VERY FREQUENT SYMPTOMS IN THE GENERAL POPULATION
• PARTICULARLY PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM HYPERTENSION AND/OR HEART DISEASE
• STUDIES IN PRIMARY CARE SETTINGS SHOW THAT PALPITATIONS ACCOUNT FOR 16 PERCENT OF THE SYMPTOMS THAT PROMPT A VISIT TO THE GENERAL PRACTITIONER
• SECOND MAJOR SYMPTOM ONLY TO CHEST PAIN THAT AS THE PRESENTING COMPLAINT FOR CARDIOLOGY EVALUATION
CASE STUDY

JM is a 37 year old female who was running the Little Rock Marathon. When she finished the race she was dizzy, light-headed, nauseous, and felt like she could faint. She was having some intermittent chest pain as well. She went to the medical tent and was hooked up to an ECG.
CASE STUDY CONTINUED

• SHE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE HOSPITAL WITH CHEST PAIN AND ABNORMAL ECG. CARDIAC ENZYMES WERE CYCLED AND NEGATIVE. SHE HAD AN ECHOCARDIOGRAM AND HER EJECTION FRACTION WAS .25. SHE UNDERWENT CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION AND HAD WIDELY PATENT CORONARY ARTERIES WITH AN EF OF .20. SHE WAS STARTED ON ACE THERAPY AND BETA-BLOCKER THERAPY AND DISCHARGED WITH A LIFEVEST.
CAUSES OF PALPITATIONS

• CARDIAC ARRYTHMIAS
• STRUCTURAL HEART DISEASE
• PSYCHOSOMATIC DISORDERS
• SYSTEMIC DISEASES
• EFFECTS OF MEDICAL AND RECREATIONAL DRUGS
POPULATION

• PALPITATIONS DUE TO ARRHYTHMIAS OCCURRED IN 41 PERCENT
• STRUCTURAL HEART DISEASE 3 PERCENT
• PSYCHOSOMATIC DISORDER IN 31 PERCENT
• SYSTEMIC CAUSES 4 PERCENT
• MEDICATIONS OR ILLICIT DRUGS IN 6 PERCENT OF CASES
• OLDER PATIENTS AND MEN ARE LIKELY TO HAVE AN ARRHYTHMIC CAUSE OF THEIR PALPITATIONS
• YOUNGER PATIENTS AND WOMEN TEND TO HAVE PSYCHOSOMATIC CAUSE
EVALUATION OF PALPITATIONS

• CIRCUMSTANCES PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF PALPITATIONS
• ACTIVITY
• PREDISPOSING FACTORS (EMOTIONAL STRESS, EXERCISE, ACTIVITY)
• ONSET OF PALPITATIONS
• PRECEDED BY OTHER SYMPTOMS
WORKUP OF PALPITATIONS

• ECG
• BLOOD TESTS
• AMBULATORY ECG
• ECHOCARDIOGRAM
• EXERCISE TESTING
CRITERIA FOR CARDIOLOGY REFERRAL

• CHANGES ON RESTING ECG
• ATRIAL FLUTTER/FIBRILLATION
• SVT THAT RESPONDS TO VALSALVA OR CAROTID SINUS MASSAGE
• WOLF-PARKINSON-WHITE SYNDROME
• LEFT BUNDLE BRANCH BLOCK
• PROLONGED QT INTERVAL
• FAMILY HISTORY OF SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH BEFORE AGE 40
CRITERIA CONTINUED

• SYMPTOMS OF SYNCOPE OR NEAR SYNCOPE
• ONSET OF SYNCOPE OR DIZZINESS DURING EXERCISE
• HISTORY OF CARDIAC DISEASE
After 3 months of titrating beta-blocker therapy and ace therapy repeat echocardiogram showed an ef of .30. The patient underwent treatment with ICD implantation.
The definition of Mass confusion

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