

Asymptomatic Murmur Evaluation: Echocardiographic and Referral Type Outcome

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ABSTRACT

Background: Asymptomatic murmurs are a common finding in pediatric population. The most common causes are innocent murmurs and minor structural heart disease. Beyond the age of 6 weeks patients are unlikely to have major underlying heart disease.

Purpose: To investigate the diagnostic value of the echocardiography in the evaluation of asymptomatic children with a cardiac murmur, and describe outcomes of echocardiography done to determine if utility varies among age of the study group.

Methodology: A retrospective cohort study of 528 sedated children who had echocardiograms performed between January 2011 and January 2013 at Fayoum University hospital. Results: Seventy five percent (396/528) of patients had no or mild disease. Moderate pathology was seen among 15.9% of patients and severe pathology was seen in 9.1%. Moderate to severe disease seen more in young age groups. The incidence of abnormal pathology was higher among tests ordered by cardiologists.

Conclusion: Clinical assessment by a Pediatric Cardiologist is sufficient to distinguish pathologic from innocent heart murmurs. Echocardiography, although diagnostic when heart disease is suspected, is unnecessary in a pediatric patient with clinically diagnosed innocent murmur.

Key words: Asymptomatic, Cardiologist, Echocardiography, Murmur.