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Molecular Genetics in Sudden Cardiac Death

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Message from the Guest Editor

A high proportion of sudden cardiac death (SCD) in individuals under 50 years of age is caused by hereditary cardiovascular diseases. These include diseases of the heart muscle (cardiomyopathy), electrical diseases (arrhythmogenic syndromes), and hereditary diseases of the aorta and large vessels, where patients are at risk of sudden cardiac arrest or acute dissection of large vessels. Familial hyperlipidaemia (FH) may represent an important cause of SCD in males < 40 years of age or females < 50 years of age.

Involved professionals who participate in this process include forensic doctors or pathologists, acute care doctors, clinical geneticists, molecular geneticists, cardiologists, psychologists, and general practitioners.

Current molecular genetic methods such as next-generation sequencing may yield P/LP DNA variants in about 20% of post-mortem analysis. This yield may increase in familiar cases up to 50% according to the recent literature. Furthermore, patients with unexplained heart failure or ventricular arrhythmias should be offered a family cascade screening in the primary prevention of SCD in relatives.



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Special Issue



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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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