LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Artifacts in Telephonic Transmitted ECGs

Some telephone transmitted ECGs show peculiar artifact. The most common pattern is shown in the accompanying ECG. There is a significant resemblance to saddle-shaped type Brugada syndrome with right bundle branch block and ST elevation. Also noted is the late T-wave inversion, which can appear as a lone abnormality.

While this pattern is now easily recognized as artifact, what is not known is whether the system with changes in the right precordial leads would result in missing a diagnosis of anteroseptal infarction. Attempts to have the paramedical firm responsible for 90% of the tracings of this nature correct the problem have not been met with any success. We were initially concerned about possible Brugada syndrome when these changes surfaced over three years ago, but now we simply interpret the change as a telephonic artifact and code the change as a technically flawed ECG.

Several clients with similar ECGs have had subsequent office electrocardiograms with normal results.

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