

Peripartum Cardiomyopathy and Myocardial Recovery

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Background: Peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM) is a myocardial disease of pregnancy in which heart failure develops during the last month of pregnancy or up to five months post-delivery with no identified cause. Recovery of the myocardium is anticipated and variable factors are implicated.

Objective: To evaluate the time of diagnosis in PPCM and how it could affect myocardial recovery.

Design: A Prospective Clinical Study.

Setting: Salmaniya Medical Complex, Bahrain.

Method: Patients who fulfilled the criteria for PPCM were prospectively recruited from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014. Follow-up was extended until June 2016.

Personal characteristics, clinical, biochemical and echocardiographic data were documented. All patients had clinical assessment and echocardiogram at six months post-delivery.

Result: Four females suffering from PPCM were included in the study. Two (50%) had complete recovery of their left ventricular (LV) function after six months. The time of presentation and diagnosis was at early postpartum period. The recovered myocardium was assessed further with dobutamine stress echocardiography (DSE) that confirmed normal contractile reserve. The two recovered patients reconceived with no relapse. On the other hand, the other two (50%) non-recovered females had their diagnosis made either at antepartum or late postpartum period.

Conclusion: Recovery of PPCM might be related to the early postpartum diagnosis. Having high clinical suspicion for diagnosis might help to improve the outcome. Timely instituted therapy might aid in LV recovery.