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Effective regurgitant oriffice area vs vena contracta method as predictors of outcomes in severe tricuspid regurgitation

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Background: There is no gold standard echocardiographic method to evaluate tricuspid regurgitation (TR) severity. ESC guidelines recommend using a combination of several methods. The purpose of this study was to compare the prognostic value of the two most commonly used methods for the evaluation of the TR: Effective regurgitant orifice area (EROA) method and biplane vena contracta (VC) method.

Methods: Consecutive asymptomatic patients with significant TR (moderate to severe or severe by echocardiography) evaluated in the Heart Valve Clinic between 2015-2018 were included.

TR severity was evaluated by a combination of several methods, including EROA method and biplane VC method, using EPIQ system. End-point included cardiovascular mortality, tricuspid valve surgery or heart failure.

Results: A total of 70 patients were included (mean age was 74±8 years. 71% females). According to aetiology, 94% were functional TR (60% due to left valve disease, 27% due to tricuspid annulus dilatation, 13% others). During a median follow up of 18 months IIQR: 4-281, 35% of the patients reached the combined end-point (n=16 developed right heart failure, n=17 underwent tricuspid valve surgery, and n=3 died).

Patients with events showed a larger EROA (0.55 vs 0.40 p: 0.036) but no significance different was found in VC (8.03 vs 7.80 p: 0.27). Among both parameters, the tricuspid EROA was the only prognostic factor of the combined endpoint (EROA, HR 24.22 [1.54-380.86], p=0.023; VC, HR 1.022 [0.882-1.183]. A value of EROA of 0.42 reached the best accuracy to predicted poor outcomes (p<0.01).

Conclusion: Among the two most commonly used methods for the evaluation of the TR, EROA was the only method that obtained prognostic value during follow-up.