

## THE FLOPPY MITRAL VALVE

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The essential lesion in the floppy mitral valve is a myxomatous or mucoid degeneration of the collagenous cusp fibrosa. This condition was first recognised in 1958 and now forms a significant cause of chronic valvular disease.(3)

Seventeen specimens of mitral valve examined in the Pathology Department, National Heart Hospital, London and three specimens examined in the Pathology Department, University of Colombo form the basis of this communication.

The average age incidence was 52.4 years. This observation is in agreement with that of other workers.(2) The sex incidence showed a preponderance of males (70%) over females (0%). Dyspnoea was the common presenting symptom, chest pain occurring rarely. The clinical expression of a floppy valve is variable and many patients are known to have had murmurs for a number of years without any symptoms, a feature also observed in eight patients in this series. Chordal rupture was present in ten cases. The risk of infective endocarditis is well recognised. (1) and was seen in one.

Macroscopically the affected valves are white and opaque with a marked increase in the surface area. Histological examination showed replacement of the normal dense collagen of cusp fibrosa by loose spongy tissue containing large amounts of acid mucopolysaccharide.

### References

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2. McKay, R. and Yacoub, M. H. Clinical and pathological findings in patient with 'floppy' valves treated surgically *Circulation* 48 (suppl. 3) 63 (1973).
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