

CARDIORESPIRATORY MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRONIC HYPERVENTILATION SYNDROME

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Patients (n=20) with chronic hyperventilation syndrome (F : M ratio of 2.33 : 1 and mean age of 33 years) showed as their characteristic cardiorespiratory feature a respiratory distress punctuated by intermittent "sighs". This distress was relieved by sighing (95%), burping (60%) and yawning (45%). Eight (40%) patients noticed an increase in their respiratory movements.

Palpitations were experienced by eighteen (90%) patients—the majority (65%) obtaining relief with a hot drink.

Chest pain occurred in eighteen (90%) patients. The site of the pain was retrosternal (44%), left sided (39%), diffuse (11%) or right sided (6%). The pain was often tightening in nature (56%) but was occasionally pricking (22%) or non-specific (22%). Radiation of the pain to the back or neck was seen in only 28%.

The heart rate and blood pressure were normal, with a mean of 81/min and 120/75 mm Hg respectively. The mean respiratory rate was 32/min (range, 16-44).

The electrocardiogram was normal in all patients. The main non-specific changes seen were T inversion (39%) and flat T (33%) in lead III, an upright T in V_1 (56%) and extension of T inversion to leads V_3 or V_4 (11%) and V_2 (6%). The QRS and T axes were $38.1^\circ \pm 26.9^\circ$ and $31.1^\circ \pm 23.7^\circ$ (mean \pm S.D.) respectively from the horizontal. The QRS—T angle was usually narrow and was either positively (mean of 22.8°) or negatively (mean of -16.6°) directed.