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A new algorithm for arrhythmia interpretation

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ABSTRACT

Background: Electrocardiogram (ECG) is an essential tool used to diagnose serious heart disease but its interpretation is challenging for undergraduate students and junior practitioners despite numerous methods that have been suggested to aid ECG interpretation. This paper aims to present a new algorithm for arrhythmia interpretation that is superior to current methods to be used as a supplement to lecture materials for medical students.

Methods: A new systematic algorithm is introduced in this paper. To evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed algorithm, a study was carried out in a medical university. Two groups of medical interns were educated via lecture and teaching rounds, either using the proposed algorithm or without using the algorithm. At the end of one month training, students of both groups were blindly evaluated.

Results: The group trained using the algorithm scored an average of 93% on the evaluation, while the group trained without it averaged 62%. This was found to be a statistically significant difference ($p<0.01$).

Conclusion: The proposed method for education of arrhythmia interpretation can improve physicians' competency in ECG interpretation.

Keywords: Electrocardiogram; Arrhythmia interpretation; Algorithm; Education.

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