



AC101

Adult Cardiology & Clinical Cardiovascular Medicine • Poster Presentation

CURRENT PATTERN OF SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN OAUTHC, ILE-IFE, NIGERIA.

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Background: Sudden cardiac death (SCD) is a major cause of cardiovascular mortality worldwide but remains under-investigated in sub-Saharan Africa. Earlier Nigerian autopsy studies identified hypertensive heart disease (HHD) as the predominant cause of SCD, with coronary artery disease (CAD) reported infrequently. However, whether the pathological spectrum of SCD has evolved with epidemiological transitions and increasing cardiovascular risk factors remains unclear.

Aim: To characterize the contemporary pathological causes of autopsy-confirmed SCD and evaluate the contribution of HHD and coronary atherosclerosis in a Nigerian tertiary center.

Methods: The records of the autopsies performed and histology on consecutive autopsy-confirmed SCDs over 15 years (2011–2025) were reviewed. Demographic characteristics, cardiovascular risk factors, gross and histopathological findings were extracted and analyzed. Cases were classified as HHD, coronary atherosclerotic disease, or combined pathology.

Results: Sixteen cases (87.5% male; mean age 49.9 years; range 18–76 years) were identified, including four individuals below 40 years. HHD was the predominant pathological finding, occurring in 8/16 (50%) cases. Coronary atherosclerotic or degenerative vascular pathology occurred in 5/16 (31.3%), higher than the 1.6–4% prevalence reported in earlier Nigerian autopsy series. Combined HHD and coronary atherosclerotic disease occurred in 2/16 (12.5%). Pulmonary edema occurred in 5/16 (31.3%), while one case of myocardial infarction was associated with pulmonary thromboembolism.

Conclusion: HHD remains the leading pathological cause of SCD in this cohort. However, the relatively frequent occurrence of coronary atherosclerotic disease suggests a changing pathological spectrum of SCD in Nigeria. Larger multicenter autopsy studies are needed to confirm these findings.

Keywords: Sudden cardiac death, OAUTHC