

Natural history of chagasic cardiopathy in Chile. Follow-up of 71 cases after 4 years

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As part of study of Chagasic cardiopathy in Chile we report a follow-up study of 100 cardiopathic patients from two endemic areas who had been diagnosed 4 years earlier during an epidemiological and clinical survey. The follow-up consisted of a clinical, serological and electrocardiographic examination, and a continuous ECG recording for 60 min to detect possible arrhythmias. From the original 100 cases, three had died: One of a gastric cancer and the other two due to probable chagasic cardiopathy. Twenty-six had migrated to other areas and were lost to our study. From the remaining 71 patients, 48 were asymptomatic and 23 had complaints including palpitations, dyspnoea and Stokes-Adams crisis. In most cases, seropositivity by indirect haemagglutination did not change, but in six cases the titres decreased, becoming negative in three of them. Xenodiagnosis was positive in 19.3% of seropositive patients. The ECG had returned to normal in 18 cases (17%) but showed a higher degree of bloc