CARDIOVASCULAR ADAPTATION IN ATHLETES OF SOUTH ASIAN ORIGIN: RELEVANCE TO UNIVERSAL IMPLEMENTATION OF PRE-PARTICIPATION CARDIOVASCULAR SCREENING

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Introduction

Regular physical exercise results in structural and electrophysiological cardiac changes, referred to as ‘athletes’ heart’. Ethnicity is an important determinant of such adaptation in athletes; it has been demonstrated that Afro-Caribbean (AC) athletes exhibit a greater degree of cardiac adaptation compared to Caucasian athletes (CA). However, there is a conspicuous lack of data on cardiac adaptation in Asian athletes, particularly those of South Asian (SA) origin. This study describes the ECG and echocardiographic characteristics in competitive athletes of SA descent.

Methods

Between 2011 and 2012, 100 male SA athletes (age 14–35) underwent pre-participation cardiovascular screening with ECG and