

研究成果の刊行に関する一覧表

雑誌

発表者氏名	論文タイトル名	発表誌名	巻号	ページ	出版年
Shimizu W, Matsuo K, Kokubo Y, Satomi K, Kurita T, Noda T, Nagaya N, Suyama K, Aihara N, Kamakura S, Inamoto N, Akahoshi M, Tomoike H	Sex hormone and gender difference. Role of testosterone on male predominance in Brugada syndrome.	J Cardiovasc Electrophysiol	18	415-421	2007
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#### IV. 研究成果の刊行物・別刷り

# 28

## Provocative Testing in Inherited Arrhythmias

Wataru Shimizu and Michael J. Ackerman

### Introduction

Heritable channelopathies that include congenital long QT syndrome (LQTS), Brugada syndrome (BrS), and catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia (CPVT) affect an estimated 1 in 2000 persons, may present with syncope or sudden cardiac death, and often elude detection by standard 12-lead electrocardiography (ECG). In LQTS, an estimated 40% of genetically affected subjects have “concealed” LQTS with a normal or borderline heart rate corrected QT interval (QTc) at rest. A significant proportion of patients with BrS has concealed BrS with no evidence of a type 1 Brugada electrocardiographic pattern at rest. Every patient with CPVT has a normal resting ECG. Provocative testing with catecholamines and pharmacological testing with sodium channel blockers are critical diagnostic tests in the evaluation of these channelopathies and can help unmask LQTS, BrS, and CPVT in their concealed state. The role of these provocative tests in the evaluation of inherited arrhythmia syndromes will be reviewed in this chapter.

### Congenital Long QT Syndrome

Congenital LQTS is characterized by QT prolongation in the electrocardiogram (ECG) and its trademark dysrhythmia of polymorphic ventricular tachycardia known as torsade de pointes (TdP).<sup>1</sup> The clinical diagnosis of LQTS is mainly based on the resting QTc, cardiac events such as syncope, aborted cardiac arrest, and sudden

cardiac death, and a family history of apparent LQTS.<sup>2</sup> However, the electrocardiographic diagnosis at baseline has long been expected to miss some patients affected by congenital LQTS (so called concealed LQTS) as evidenced by syncopal events occurring among family members with a “normal” QT interval.<sup>3</sup> Since 1995, when the first two genes responsible for LQTS were identified, molecular genetic studies have revealed a total of 10 forms of congenital LQTS caused predominantly by cardiac channel mutations or mutations involving key  $\beta$  or auxiliary subunits.<sup>4</sup> Among the 10 genetic subtypes, LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3 constitute the majority of genotyped LQTS and approximately 75% of all LQTS.<sup>5</sup> With these molecular illuminations, this entity of concealed or low penetrant LQTS has been proved genetically. Vincent *et al.* reported that 5 (6%) of 82 mutation carriers from three LQT1 families had a normal QT interval.<sup>6</sup> Priori *et al.* conducted molecular screening in nine families with apparently sporadic cases of LQTS, demonstrating a very low penetrance (38%, 9/24 patients).<sup>7</sup> Swan and co-workers reported that the sensitivity and specificity for identifying genotype-positive patients were 53 and 100%, respectively, in an LQT1 family with a specific *KCNQ1* mutation (D188N).<sup>8</sup> More recently, a large study of genotyped LQTS by Priori *et al.* showed that the percentage of genetically affected patients with a normal QTc was significantly higher in the LQT1 (36%) than in the LQT2 (19%) or the LQT3 (10%) syndromes.<sup>9</sup> Overall, these findings strongly suggest the need for novel tools to unveil concealed mutation carriers of LQTS, especially those

with type 1 LQTS (LQT1). The identification of patients with concealed LQTS affords the opportunity to initiate potentially life-saving pharmacotherapies and healthstyle modifications.

Many but not all patients with congenital LQTS suffer from cardiac events such as syncope and/or sudden cardiac death during physical exercise or mental stress. Therefore, provocative testing using catecholamine infusion or exercise has long been used to unmask concealed forms of congenital LQTS, before genetic screening became available.<sup>10</sup>

### The Epinephrine QT Stress Test in Long QT Syndrome

Infusion of isoproterenol, a  $\beta$ -adrenergic agonist, or epinephrine, an  $\alpha + \beta$ -adrenergic agonist, has been reported to be useful as a provocative test in LQTS more than two decades ago.<sup>10</sup> The heart rate is usually increased to more than 100 beats/min by isoproterenol, especially by the use of a bolus injection, which often makes it difficult to measure the QT interval precisely due to an overlap of the next P wave on the terminal portion of the T wave. Prior to the discovery of the distinct genetic subtypes of LQTS, the responses to either epinephrine or isoproterenol were extremely heterogeneous and were deemed impossible to interpret; as a result, epinephrine QT stress testing disappeared from the diagnostic work-up of LQTS. Now, however, the heterogeneous response is understood to stem from the underlying genetic heterogeneity and the gene-specific responses to epinephrine can be exploited to expose different types of LQTS in its otherwise concealed state, particularly type 1 LQTS (LQT1). Although isoproterenol is still used occasionally, recent major insights have been gleaned from using epinephrine and are reviewed in more detail below. In contrast to provocation studies using catecholamines, Viskin and colleagues have shown that sudden heart rate oscillations precipitated by intravenous administration of adenosine may expose some patients with concealed LQTS, although genotype-specific responses have not been demonstrated.<sup>11</sup> Compared to controls, patients with LQTS exhibited an exaggerated increase in the QT interval during adenosine-induced bradycardia.

The two major protocols developed for epinephrine QT stress testing include the escalating-dose protocol by Ackerman's group (the Mayo protocol)<sup>12</sup> and the bolus injection followed by brief continuous infusion by Shimizu's group (Shimizu protocol).<sup>13</sup> Both protocols are extremely useful and safe, and overall are well tolerated. Each protocol has some advantages and disadvantages with respect to the other.

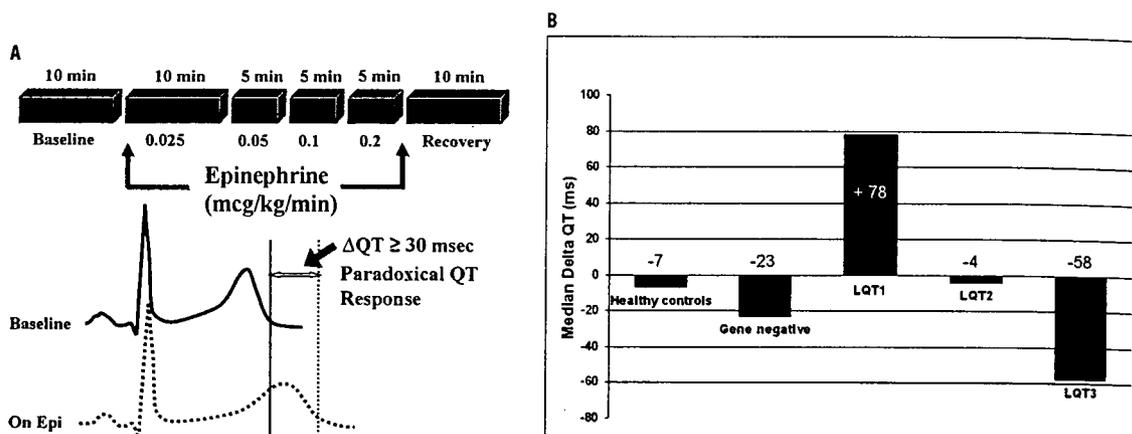
#### **Incremental, Escalating Epinephrine Infusion (Mayo Protocol)**

Ackerman and co-workers have used a 25-min incremental, escalating infusion protocol (0.025–0.3  $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$ ) in the LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3 patients and in the genotyped-negative patients (Figure 28–1A).<sup>12,14,15</sup> With epinephrine infusion at a low dose of  $\leq 0.1 \mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$ , the median change of the QT interval was 78 msec in LQT1, –4 msec in LQT2, –58 msec in LQT3, and –23 msec in the genotype-negative patients (Figure 28–1B). They found a paradoxical QT prolongation, defined as a 30-msec increase in the QT (not QTc) interval during low-dose epinephrine infusion, specific in the LQT1 patients (92%), but not in the LQT2 (13%), the LQT3 (0%), and the genotype-negative patients (18%). The paradoxical QT prolongation had a sensitivity of 92.5%, specificity of 86%, positive predictive value of 76%, and negative predictive value of 96% for LQT1 vs. non-LQT1 status (Table 28–1), and provides a presumptive, pregenetic clinical diagnosis of type 1 LQTS (LQT1).

The major advantages of this escalating infusion protocol are better patient tolerance and a lower incidence of false-positive responses. On the other hand, this protocol seems less effective in exposing patients with LQT2 compared to the bolus protocol by Shimizu *et al.* described below. However, this disadvantage is reported to be partially overcome by focusing on the change of T wave morphology during low-dose epinephrine infusion. Khositseth *et al.* reported that the epinephrine-induced notched T wave was more indicative of LQT2 status.<sup>15</sup>

#### **Bolus Injection followed by Brief Continuous Infusion (Shimizu Protocol)**

The bolus protocol by Shimizu and co-workers was developed on the basis of a differential



**FIGURE 28-1.** Epinephrine QT stress testing in LQTS (Mayo protocol). (A) Schematic of the epinephrine infusion protocol used to unmask concealed type 1 long QT syndrome (LQT1). With this protocol, the paradoxical response is defined as an increase in the absolute

QT interval by  $\geq 30$  msec during infusion of low-dose epinephrine ( $\leq 0.1 \mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$ ). (B) Summary of the low-dose epinephrine-absolute QT response performed in over 200 subjects at the Mayo Clinic.

response of action potential duration (APD) and QT interval to sympathetic stimulation with isoproterenol between the experimental LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3 models employing arterially perfused canine left ventricular wedge preparations.<sup>16</sup> Persistent prolongation of the APD and QT interval at steady-state conditions of isoproterenol infusion was reported in the LQT1 model. Under normal conditions,  $\beta$ -adrenergic stimulation is expected to increase the net outward repolarizing current due to a larger increase of outward currents, including the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -activated slow component of the delayed rectifier potassium current ( $I_{Ks}$ ) and the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -activated chloride current ( $I_{Cl(\text{Ca})}$ ), than that of an inward current, the  $\text{Na}^+/\text{Ca}^{2+}$  exchange current ( $I_{\text{Na-Ca}}$ ), resulting in an abbreviation of APD and the QT interval. A defect in  $I_{Ks}$  as seen in LQT1 could account for failure of  $\beta$ -adrenergic stimulation to abbreviate APD and the QT interval, resulting in a persistent and para-

doxic QT prolongation under sympathetic stimulation. In the LQT2 model, isoproterenol infusion was reported to initially prolong but then abbreviate APD and the QT interval probably due to an initial augmentation of  $I_{\text{Na-Ca}}$  and a subsequent stimulation of  $I_{Ks}$ . In contrast to the LQT1 and LQT2 models, isoproterenol infusion constantly abbreviated APD and the QT interval as a result of a stimulation of  $I_{Ks}$  in the LQT3 model, because an inward late  $I_{\text{Na}}$  was augmented in this genotype. Therefore, the bolus protocol of epinephrine testing was expected not only to unmask concealed patients with LQTS but also to presumptively diagnose the three most common subtypes, LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3, by monitoring the temporal course of the QTc to epinephrine at peak effect following bolus injection and at steady-state effect during continuous infusion.

Clinical data using the bolus protocol suggested that sympathetic stimulation produces genotype-specific responses of the QTc interval in patients with LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3 (Figure 28-2).<sup>17,18</sup> Epinephrine remarkably prolonged the QTc interval at peak effect when the heart rate is maximally increased (1–2 min after the bolus injection), and the QTc remained prolonged during steady-state epinephrine effect (3–5 min) in patients with LQT1.<sup>17,18</sup> As an aside, this steady-state effect likely correlates with the paradoxical QT response seen with the Mayo protocol. The QTc was also prolonged at peak epinephrine effect (during bolus)

**TABLE 28-1.** Validity of the epinephrine QT stress test (Mayo protocol) at a QT  $\geq 30$  msec.

$\Delta QT^a$	LQT1	Non-LQT1	Predictive value
$\Delta QT \geq 30$ msec	37	12	Positive predictive value = 76%
$\Delta QT < 30$ msec	3	73	Negative predictive value = 96%
	Sensitivity = 92.5%	Specificity = 86%	

<sup>a</sup> $\Delta$ , the change (delta) in the QT interval (epinephrine minus baseline).

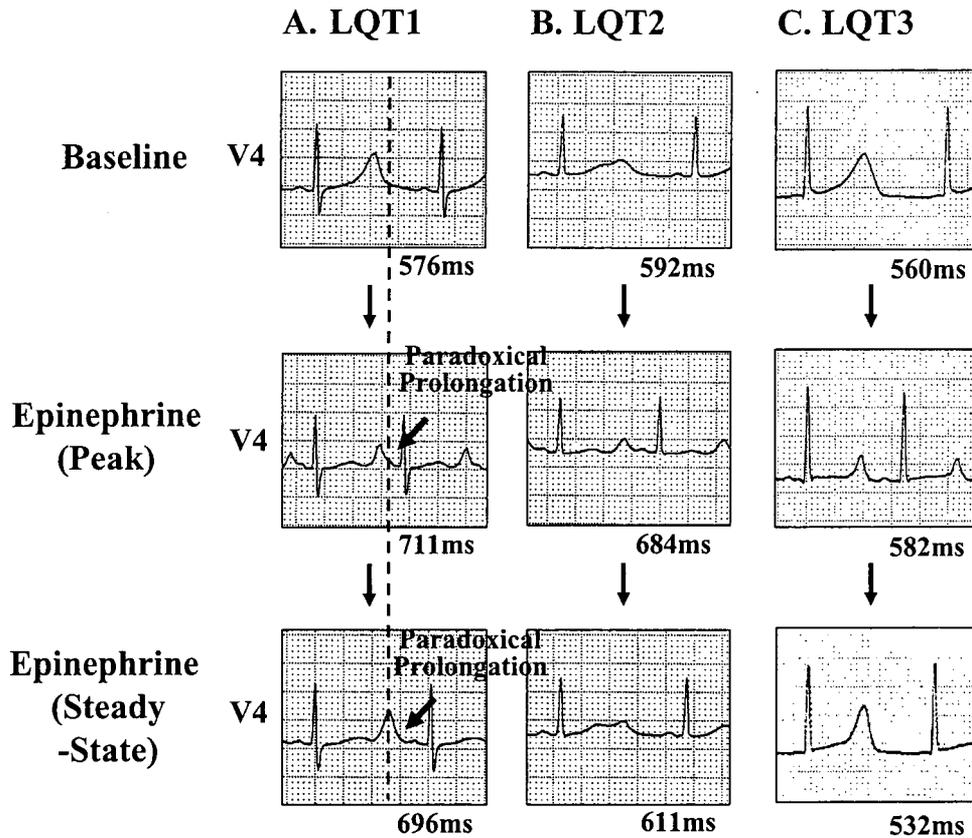


FIGURE 28-2. Differential temporal course of the heart rate corrected QT interval (QTc) to epinephrine QT stress testing in LQT1, 2, and 3 (Shimizu protocol). The V4 lead ECGs under baseline conditions and at peak and steady-state epinephrine effects in LQT1 (A), LQT2 (B), and LQT3 (C) patients using the Shimizu bolus and infusion protocol are shown. The corrected QT interval (QTc) was prominently prolonged from 576 to 711 msec at peak epinephrine effect, and remained prolonged at steady state (696 msec) in the

patient with LQT1. It is noteworthy that paradoxical QT prolongation was seen both at peak and steady-state epinephrine effects (arrows). In the patient with LQT2, the QTc was also dramatically prolonged from 592 to 684 msec at peak, but returned to the baseline level at steady state (611 msec). It was much less prolonged (560 to 582 msec) at peak in the LQT3 patient than in either the LQT1 or LQT2 patient, and returned below the baseline level at steady state (532 msec).

in patients with LQT2, but returned to close to baseline levels at the steady-state epinephrine effect.<sup>18</sup> In contrast, the QTc was less prolonged at the peak epinephrine effect in the LQT3 patients than in the LQT1 or LQT2 patients, and was abbreviated below baseline levels at the steady-state epinephrine effect.<sup>18</sup> The responses of the corrected  $T_{peak}-T_{end}$  interval reflecting transmural dispersion of repolarization (TDR) approximately paralleled those of the QT interval,<sup>19</sup> supporting the cellular basis for genotype-specific triggers for cardiac events.

By using the steady-state epinephrine effect, Shimizu *et al.* reported an improvement in clinical

electrocardiographic diagnosis (sensitivity) from 68% to 87% in the 31 patients with LQT1 and from 83% to 91% in the 23 patients with LQT2, but not in the 6 patients with LQT3 (from 83% to 83%).<sup>18</sup> The bolus protocol of epinephrine effectively predicts the underlying genotype of the LQT1, LQT2, and LQT3 (Figure 28-3).<sup>18</sup> The prolongation of QTc  $\geq 35$  msec at steady-state epinephrine effect could differentiate LQT1 from LQT2, LQT3, or control patients with a predictive accuracy  $\geq 90\%$ . The prolongation of QTc  $\geq 80$  msec at peak epinephrine effect could differentiate LQT2 from LQT3 or control patients with a predictive accuracy of 100%.

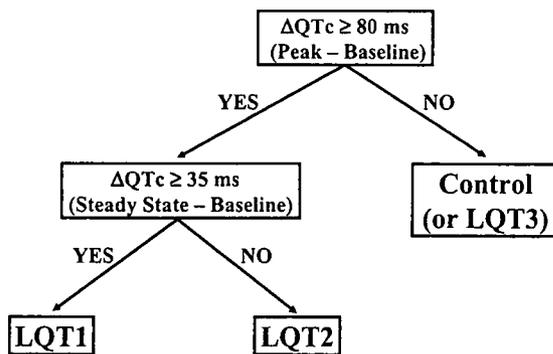


FIGURE 28-3. A flow chart to predict genotype with epinephrine QT stress testing (Shimizu Protocol).

Whether utilizing the Mayo protocol or the Shimizu protocol, the responses to epinephrine should be viewed as diagnostic only, not prognostic. Induction of TdP or ventricular fibrillation is extremely uncommon. In over 400 studies conducted using the Mayo protocol and the Shimizu protocol respectively, we have observed only two episodes of TdP (10 beats and 20 beats) and one episode of macroscopic T wave alternans. In addition, these gene-specific responses are attenuated by  $\beta$  blockers. If a patient displays, epinephrine-induced bradycardia rather than the expected increase in heart rate, then the study should be terminated, a diagnostic interpretation should not be rendered, and a period of monitored beta blocker washout should be considered.

Importantly, the diagnostic profiles gleaned from one protocol should *not* be applied to the other protocol. For example, using the Mayo protocol, we have observed healthy volunteers display a QTc of 600 msec ( $\Delta QTc = 140$  msec) during epinephrine infusion due to a negligible change in the absolute QT interval but a brisk chronotropic response. This response could be viewed as either an LQT1 (steady-state) or LQT2 (peak) response if the Shimizu algorithm was erroneously applied (Figure 28-3) in the setting of the Mayo protocol (Figure 28-1A). Here, it is critical to remember that the key determinant is epinephrine-mediated changes in the QT interval for the Mayo protocol and epinephrine-mediated changes in the QTc for the Shimizu protocol. Finally, a caveat regarding epinephrine-accentuated U waves is in order as

erroneous inclusion of such U waves during epinephrine infusion underlies some of the false positives.

Since molecular diagnosis is still unavailable to many institutes and requires high costs and is time consuming, a clinical diagnosis of concealed LQTS by the epinephrine QT stress test can direct proper counseling and facilitate the initiation of preventive measures such as QT drug avoidance. Furthermore, a presumptive, pregenetic diagnosis of either LQT1, LQT2, or LQT3 based upon the response to epinephrine can guide gene-specific treatment strategies. Finally, since 25% of LQTS remains genetically elusive, the identification of patients with LQTS and an LQT1-like response to epinephrine, for example, may lead to the identification of novel LQTS-causing susceptibility genes.

## Brugada Syndrome

Brugada syndrome is characterized by coved-type ST-segment elevation in the right precordial electrocardiographic leads (V1-V3) and an episode of ventricular fibrillation (VF) in the absence of structural heart disease.<sup>20</sup> However, the ST segment elevation is dynamic and is often concealed, and is reported to be accentuated just before and after episodes of ventricular fibrillation (VF).<sup>21</sup> A variety of antiarrhythmic drugs and autonomic agents have been reported to provoke typical ST-segment elevation.<sup>22</sup> Experimental studies have suggested that an intrinsically prominent transient outward current ( $I_{to}$ )-mediated action potential (AP) notch and a subsequent loss of AP dome in the epicardium, but not in the endocardium, of the right ventricular outflow tract give rise to a transmural voltage gradient, resulting in a typical ST-segment elevation in leads V1-V3.<sup>23</sup> Because the maintenance of the AP dome is determined by the balance of currents active at the end of phase 1 of the AP (principally  $I_{to}$  and the L-type calcium current [ $I_{Ca-L}$ ]), any interventions that increase outward currents (e.g.,  $I_{to}$ ,  $I_{Ks}$ ,  $I_{Kr}$ ) or decrease inward currents (e.g.,  $I_{Ca-L}$ , fast  $I_{Na}$ ) at the end of phase 1 of the AP can accentuate ST-segment elevation, thus producing the Brugada phenotype.

### Provocative Testing with Sodium Channel Blockers

Among the interventions above, sodium channel blockers effectively amplify or unmask ST-segment elevation, and are used as a provocative test in patients with concealed BrS showing transient or no spontaneous ST-segment elevation.<sup>24,25</sup> Among the sodium channel blockers, the class IC drugs (flecainide, 2 mg/kg in 10 min, iv; pilsicainide 1 mg/kg in 10 min, iv) produce the most pronounced ST-segment elevation due to strong use-dependent blocking of fast  $I_{Na}$  secondary to their slow dissociation from the sodium channels.<sup>24</sup> Pilsicainide, a pure class IC drug developed

in Japan, seems to induce ST-segment elevation more than flecainide, which is widely used throughout the world. (Figure 28-4). Induction of ventricular arrhythmias by pilsicainide was reported to be less rare than anticipated.<sup>26</sup> In other words, caution should be exercised when using pilsicainide in BrS drug challenge testing because of the increased potential for false-positive responses. Further studies with genetic data as the golden standard will be required to evaluate the true sensitivity and specificity of the provocative testing with each sodium channel blocker. Class IA antiarrhythmic drugs (ajmaline, procainamide, disopyramide, cibenzoline, etc.), which exhibit less use-dependent block of fast  $I_{Na}$  due to faster

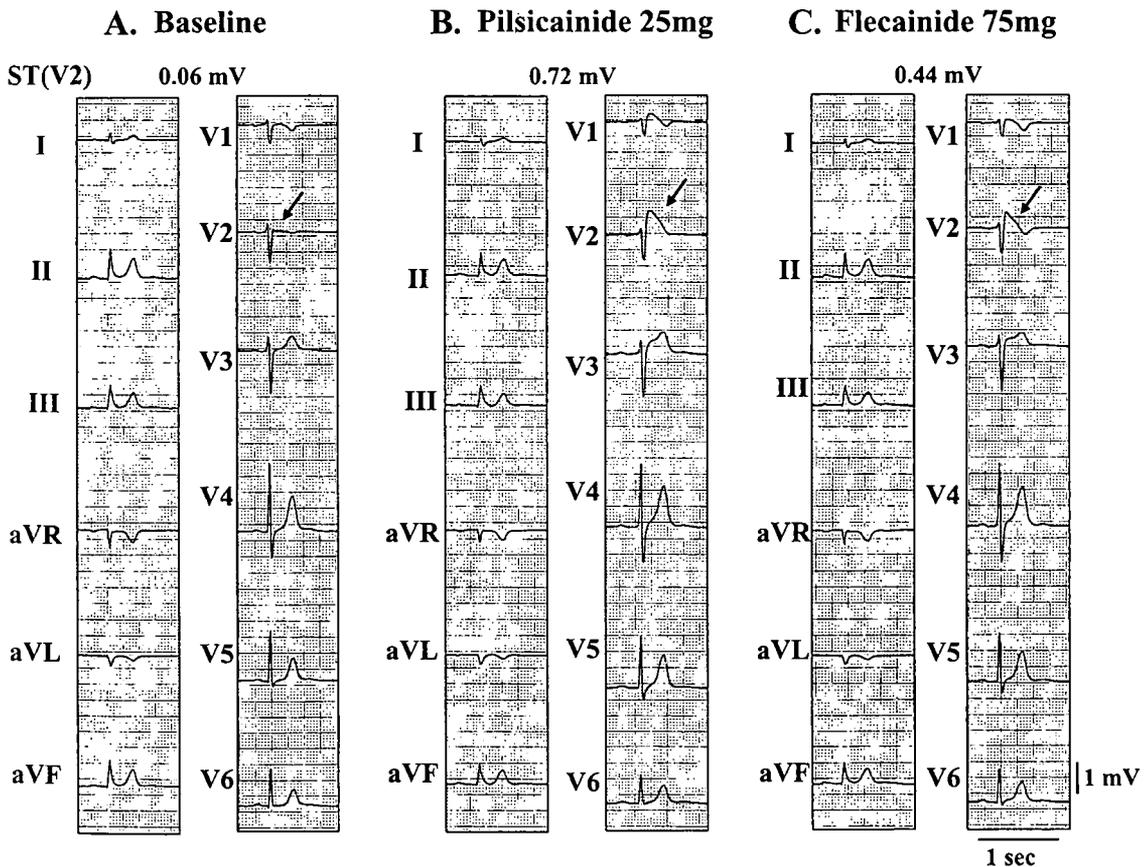
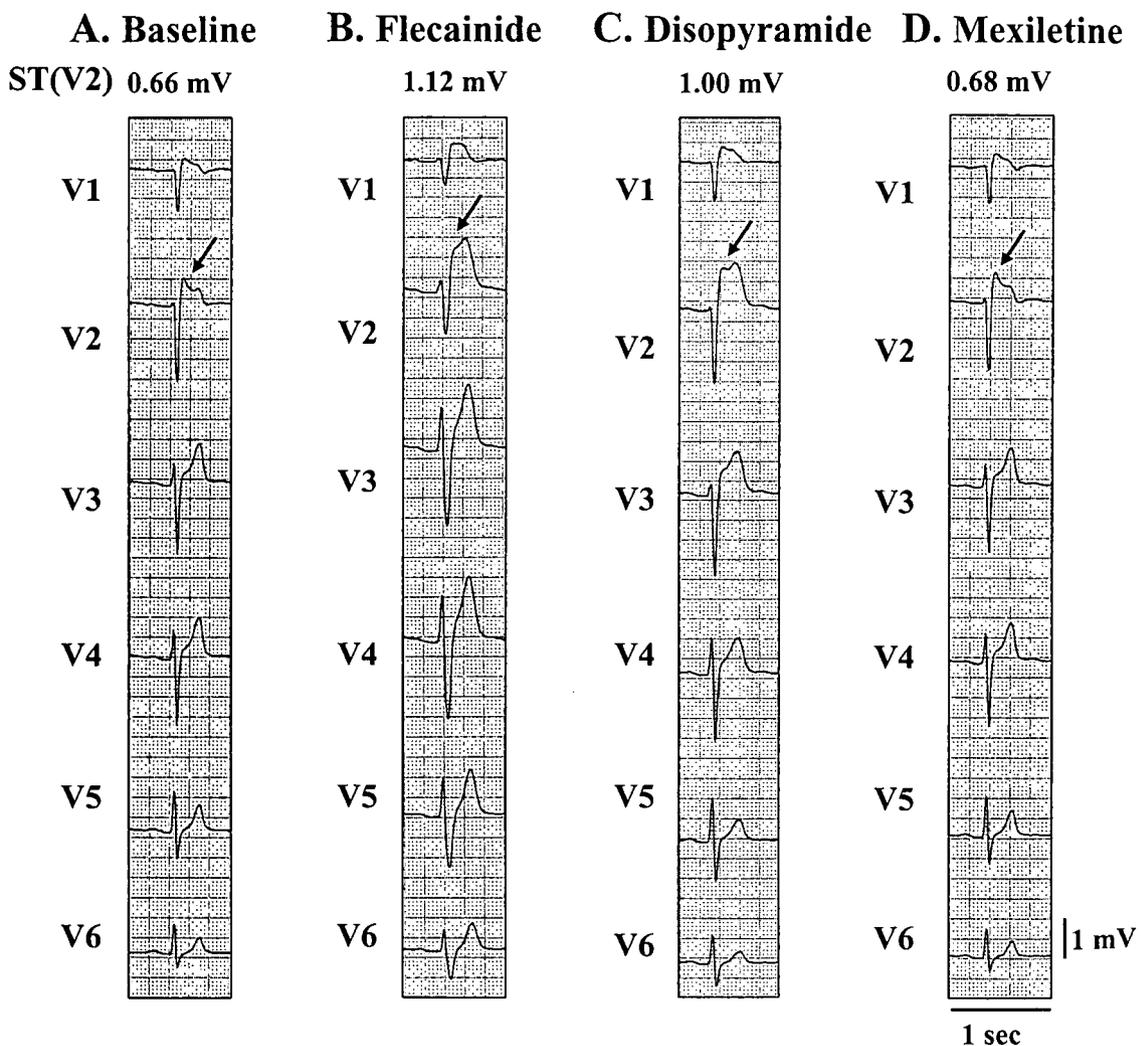


FIGURE 28-4. Effects of class IC sodium channel blockers on the ST segment in a patient with concealed Brugada syndrome. At baseline condition (A, arrow), no significant ST-segment elevation in leads V1-V3 was observed. Both pilsicainide (B, arrow) and fle-

cainide (C, arrow) induced Type 1 covered ST-segment elevation; however, a smaller dose of pilsicainide injection (25 mg) produced more prominent ST-segment elevation than that by flecainide injection (75 mg) in lead V2 (0.72 vs. 0.44 mV).

dissociation of the drug, show a weaker ST-segment elevation than class IC drugs<sup>22,24,25</sup> (Figure 28-5B and C). Ajmaline (1 mg/kg, in 5 min, iv) has been frequently used and is reported to be safer with malignant ventricular arrhythmias in only 1.3% of the patients tested.<sup>27</sup> Wolpert *et al.* reported that ajmaline induced or enhanced Type 1 ST-segment elevation more frequently than flecainide, and that this was due to greater inhibition

of  $I_{to}$  by flecainide.<sup>28</sup> Disopyramide (2 mg/kg in 10 min, iv) and procainamide (10 mg/kg, in 10 min, iv) show weaker accentuation of the ST-segment elevation due to their smaller effect on fast  $I_{Na}$  and mild to moderate action to block  $I_{to}$  (Figure 28-5C).<sup>22,24,25</sup> Class IB drugs (mexiletine, lidocaine, etc.) dissociate from the sodium channel rapidly and therefore have little or no effect on fast  $I_{Na}$  at moderate and slow heart rates, and thus are unable



**FIGURE 28-5.** Effects of different sodium channel blockers on ST-segment elevation in a patient with Brugada syndrome. Six precordial lead electrocardiograms at baseline condition (A), after 100 mg flecainide injection (class IC drug) (B), after 100 mg disopyramide injection (class IA drug) (C), and after 125 mg mexiletine injection (class IB drug) are shown. At baseline con-

ditions (A, arrow), Type 2 saddleback ST-segment elevation was seen in lead V2 (0.66 mV). Flecainide more remarkably accentuated the ST-segment elevation (1.12 mV) than disopyramide (1.00 mV) (B and C, arrows), while mexiletine had no effect on the ST-segment elevation (0.68 mV) (D, arrow).

TABLE 28-2. Drugs used to unmask the Brugada syndrome.

Flecainide	2 mg/kg/10 min, iv (400 mg, po)
Pilsicainide	1 mg/kg/10 min, iv
Ajmaline	1 mg/kg/5 min, iv
Disopyramide	2mg/kg in 10 min, iv
Procainamide	10 mg/kg/10 min, iv

to cause ST-segment elevation<sup>24</sup> (Figure 28-5D). The recommended dosage of each sodium channel blocker is listed in Table 28-2.<sup>29</sup>

### Practice of Testing with Sodium Channel Blockers

The definition of a positive provocative test is a development of the diagnostic Type 1 Brugada ECG (an increase in the absolute J wave amplitude of >0.2 mV with or without right bundle branch block in at least one of the V1-V3 leads) in the case of a Type 2, Type 3, or negative ECG at baseline. The test is considered positive upon an increase in the ST-segment elevation by >0.2 mV. The test does *not* add to the diagnostic value in patients with spontaneous and constant Type 1 Brugada ECG. The test should be monitored with a continuous 12-lead electrocardiographic recording (a speed of 10 mm/sec can be used to monitor throughout the test period, interposed with recordings at 25 or 50 mm/sec), and cardiopulmonary resuscitation facilities and isoproterenol infusion should be at hand. The endpoint of the test is when (1) the diagnostic Type 1 Brugada ECG develops, (2) the ST segment in Type 2 ECG increases by  $\geq 0.2$  mV, (3) ventricular or other arrhythmias develop, or (4) the QRS widens to  $\geq 130\%$  of baseline. Particular caution should be exercised in patients with a preexisting atrial and/or ventricular conduction disturbance (e.g., suspected cases of progressive cardiac conduction defect) or in the presence of wide QRS, wide P waves, or prolonged PR intervals (infranodal conduction disease) so as to avoid the risk of precipitating complete AV block.

### Catecholaminergic Polymorphic Ventricular Tachycardia

Unlike LQTS and BrS in which the cardinal feature is often evident on the resting 12-lead ECG, this

diagnostic test is *always* normal in CPVT. Phenotypically, CPVT mimics LQTS, particularly LQT1, with exercise-induced syncope, seizures, or sudden death, but in the setting of a structurally normal heart *and* a normal 12-lead ECG.<sup>30,31</sup> Approximately two-thirds of CPVT stems from mutations in the *RyR2*-encoded ryanodine receptor/calcium release channel (CPVT1). One possible clue for CPVT1 may be the presence of marked bradycardia.<sup>32</sup> However, the hallmark signature of CPVT is exercise-induced or catecholamine-induced bidirectional ventricular tachycardia.<sup>33</sup> Presently, it is not clear whether catecholamine provocation testing is additive to standard exercise stress testing or whether isoproterenol (more commonly used for CPVT) is superior to epinephrine.

Practically speaking, when faced with a patient presenting with exercise-induced syncope or exercise-induced aborted cardiac arrest and a normal ECG (QTc = 430 msec), the differential diagnosis includes both concealed LQT1 and CPVT. As such, we advocate using the epinephrine QT stress test (either the previously discussed Mayo or Shimizu protocols). Remember that significant epinephrine-induced ventricular ectopy is extremely uncommon in LQTS and occasional premature ventricular contractions (PVCs) and even couplets are not informative. If there is paradoxical QT lengthening, then concealed LQT1 is the presumptive clinical diagnosis. On the other hand, if there is epinephrine-induced bidirectional ventricular tachycardia, then CPVT is likely. Suspicion for CPVT should be raised and CPVT-directed genetic testing initiated for lesser degrees of epinephrine-induced ventricular ectopy such as epinephrine-induced nonsustained ventricular tachycardia, TdP in the absence of paradoxical QT lengthening, and possibly even PVCs in bigeminy during epinephrine infusion. One caveat to remember is that bidirectional ventricular tachycardia can also be seen in *KCNJ2*-mediated Andersen-Tawil syndrome.<sup>34</sup>

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# 47

## Acquired Form of Brugada Syndrome

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### Brugada Syndrome

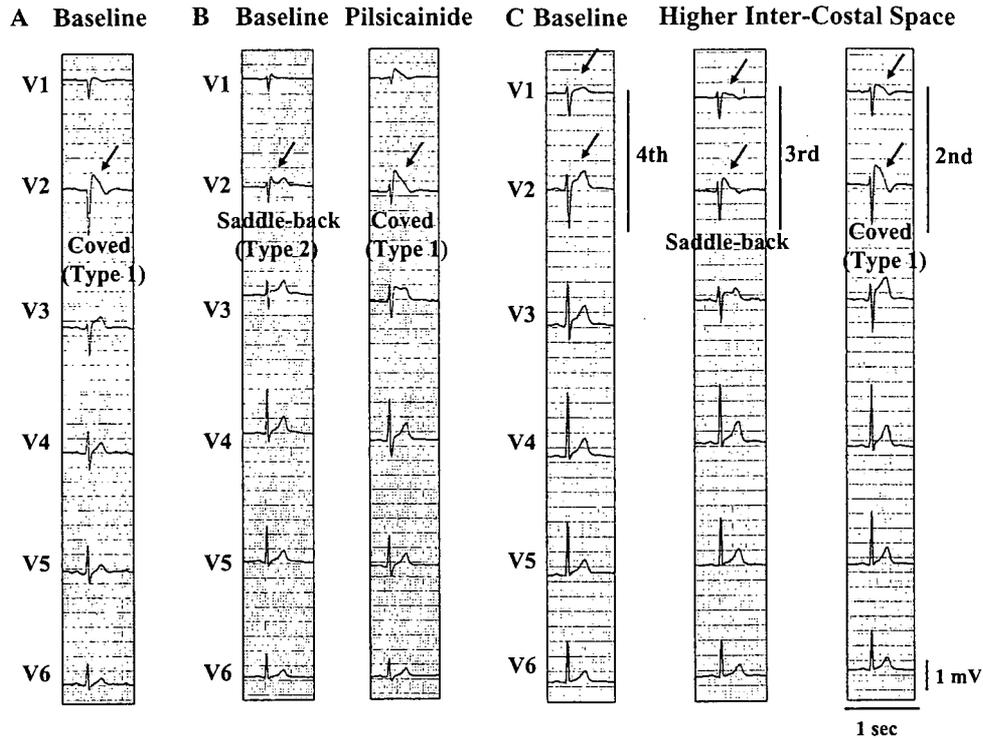
Brugada and Brugada reported in 1992 eight patients with a history of aborted sudden cardiac death due to ventricular fibrillation (VF) and a characteristic electrocardiographic pattern, consisting of right bundle branch block (RBBB) and ST-segment elevation in the right precordial electrocardiogram (ECG) (V1–V3) as a distinct clinical entity.<sup>1–8</sup> The presence of RBBB was thereafter revealed to be not necessary for the diagnosis of Brugada syndrome, although mild to moderate widening of the QRS duration is often observed.<sup>5</sup> Two specific types of ST-segment elevation, coved and saddleback, are observed in this syndrome. The ST-segment elevation is often accentuated and the coved type ST-segment elevation is more frequently recognized just before and after episodes of VF.<sup>9,10</sup> The Brugada Consensus Report in 2002 suggested three patterns of ST-segment elevation in the right precordial ECG.<sup>5</sup> Type 1 is characterized by a coved type ST-segment elevation displaying J wave amplitude or ST-segment elevation of  $\geq 0.2$  mV followed by a negative T wave (Figure 47–1A). Type 2 has a saddleback configuration, which has a high take-off ST-segment elevation ( $\geq 0.2$  mV) followed by a gradually descending ST-segment elevation (remaining  $\geq 0.1$  mV above the baseline) and a positive or biphasic T wave (Figure 47–1B). Type 3 has an ST-segment elevation of  $< 0.1$  mV of the saddleback, coved type, or both. The second Consensus Report published in 2005, however, emphasized that Type 1 coved ST-segment elevation is required to diagnose Brugada

syndrome,<sup>7</sup> because the Type 1 ECG is reported to relate to a higher incidence of VF and sudden cardiac death.<sup>6</sup> Type 2 and Type 3 ST-segment elevation are not diagnostic for the Brugada syndrome. The recordings of V1 and V2 leads at higher (third and second) intercostal spaces increase the sensitivity and the specificity of the ECG diagnosis for detecting the Brugada phenotype (Figure 47–1C),<sup>7,11</sup> and their diagnostic and prognostic values have recently been reported.<sup>12</sup>

### Molecular Aspects

In 1998, Chen and co-workers identified the first mutation linked to Brugada syndrome in *SCN5A*, the gene encoding the  $\alpha$  subunit of the sodium channel.<sup>13</sup> Antzelevitch and co-workers have recently reported that three probands associated with a Brugada like ST-segment elevation and a short QT interval were linked to mutations in *CACNA1C* (A39V and G490R) or *CACNB2* (S481L), the gene encoding the  $\alpha 1$  or  $\beta 2b$  subunit of the L-type calcium channel ( $I_{Ca-L}$ ), respectively.<sup>14</sup> However, approximately two-thirds of Brugada patients have not been yet genotyped, suggesting the presence of genetic heterogeneity.<sup>8</sup> Other candidate genes for the Brugada phenotype include the genes encoding transient outward current ( $I_{to}$ ), and delayed rectifier potassium current ( $I_K$ ), or genes that code for adrenergic receptors, cholinergic receptors, ion-channel-interacting protein, promoters, transcriptional factors, neurotransmitters, or transporters.

Functional analysis employing expression systems was reported in approximately two dozen



**FIGURE 47-1.** Type 1 coved ST-segment elevation spontaneously or unmasked by pilsicainide or higher intercostal space recordings of V1 and V2 leads. (A) Spontaneously Type 1 coved ST-segment elevation in a V2 lead under baseline conditions, pilsicainide, a class IC drug, unmasked Type 1 coved ST-segment elevation in a

V2 lead (arrow). (C) Although no ST-segment elevation was observed at standard (fourth intercostal space) V1 and V2 leads under baseline conditions (arrows), a Type 1 coved ST-segment elevation was recorded at higher (second intercostal space) V1 and V2 leads (arrows).

of the mutations in *SCN5A*, and demonstrated that all of the mutations resulted in “loss of function” of  $I_{Na}$  by several mechanisms.<sup>13,15-17</sup> These functional effects include (1) failure of the sodium channel to express, (2) a shift in the voltage and time dependence of  $I_{Na}$  activation, inactivation, or reactivation, (3) entry of the sodium channel into an intermediate state of inactivation from which it recovers more slowly, (4) accelerated inactivation of the sodium channel, or (5) trafficking defect.

### Cellular Mechanism of Brugada Phenotype

An  $I_{to}$ -mediated phase 1 notch of the action potential (AP) has been reported to be greater in the epicardial cells than in the endocardial cells in many species, including humans, by experimental studies.<sup>18</sup> Since the maintenance of the AP dome is determined by the fine balance of currents

active at the end of phase 1 of the AP (principally  $I_{to}$  and  $I_{Ca-L}$ ), any agents that cause a net outward shift at the end of phase 1 can increase the magnitude of the AP notch, leading to loss of the AP dome (all-or-none repolarization) in the epicardium, but not in the endocardium, contributing to a significant voltage gradient across the ventricular wall during ventricular activation.<sup>18</sup> The heterogeneous loss of the AP dome in the epicardium was shown to produce premature beats via a mechanism of phase 2 reentry in experimental studies using isolated sheets of canine right ventricle.<sup>19</sup> The Brugada syndrome seems to be a clinical counterpart of the mechanism of all-or-none repolarization in the epicardial cells and phase 2 reentry-induced premature beat between the adjacent epicardial cells.

An experimental model of the Brugada syndrome employing arterially perfused canine right

ventricular (RV) wedge preparations provided direct experimental evidence for the cellular mechanism of ST-segment elevation.<sup>20</sup> The  $I_{to}$ -mediated AP notch and the loss of the AP dome in the epicardial cells, but not in the endocardial cells, of the right ventricle gives rise to a transmural voltage gradient, producing ST-segment elevation in the ECG (Figure 47-2).<sup>8</sup> In the setting of coved type ST-segment elevation, heterogeneous loss of the AP dome (the coexistence of loss of dome regions and restored dome regions) in the epicardium creates a marked epicardial dispersion of repolarization, giving rise to premature beats due to phase 2 reentry, which sometimes precipitates nonsustained polymorphic ventricular tachycardia (VT) or VF (Figure 47-2).<sup>8</sup>

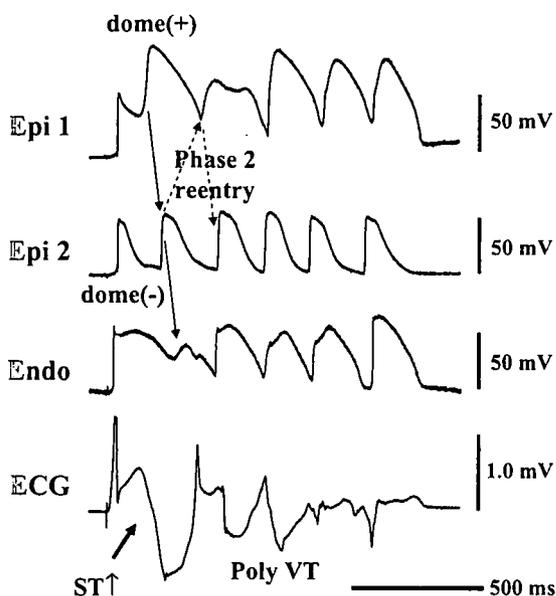


FIGURE 47-2. Coved ST-segment elevation and phase 2 reentry-induced nonsustained polymorphic ventricular tachycardia (poly VT) in a Brugada model employing an arterially perfused canine right ventricular wedge preparation. Transmembrane action potentials simultaneously recorded from two epicardial (Epi) sites and one endocardial (Endo) site together with a transmural electrocardiogram (ECG) (BCL 2000 msec). Combined administration of terfenadine ( $5 \mu\text{M}$ ) and pilsicainide ( $5 \mu\text{M}$ ) causes heterogeneous loss of the action potential dome in the epicardium (restored dome in epicardial site 1, loss of dome in epicardial site 2), giving rise to a coved type Brugada ECG. Electrotonic propagation from the site where the dome is restored (Epi 1) to the site where it is lost (Epi 2) results in development of phase 2 reentry-induced premature beats, triggering poly VT.

Our recently developed high-resolution optical mapping system, which allows us to record transmembrane APs from 256 sites simultaneously, suggested that a steep repolarization gradient between a loss of dome region and a restored dome region in the epicardium is essential to produce phase 2 reentry-induced premature beats, and that mild to moderate conduction delay is required to degenerate the reentrant pathway into VF.<sup>8,21</sup>

## Acquired Form of Brugada Syndrome

The ST-segment elevation is well known to be dynamic day-to-day even in the same patient with Brugada syndrome, and to be modulated by several drugs (mainly antiarrhythmic drugs) and autonomic agents.<sup>22</sup> Class IC antiarrhythmic drugs, which are used as a diagnostic tool in latent Brugada syndrome, amplify or unmask the ST-segment elevation most effectively as a result of their strong effect of blocking fast  $I_{Na}$ .<sup>23,24</sup> Several drugs and conditions other than IC drugs are reported to induce transient ST-segment elevation like that in Brugada syndrome. Based on the molecular and cellular aspects in Brugada syndrome mentioned above, any interventions that increase outward currents (e.g.,  $I_{to}$ , adenosine triphosphate-sensitive potassium current [ $I_{K-ATP}$ ], slow and fast activating components of  $I_K$  [ $I_{Ks}$ ,  $I_{Kr}$ ]) or decrease inward currents (e.g.,  $I_{Ca-L}$ , fast  $I_{Na}$ ) at the end of phase 1 of the AP can accentuate or unmask ST-segment elevation, similar to that found in Brugada syndrome. This is described as an “acquired” form of Brugada syndrome similar to the “acquired” form of long QT syndrome (LQTS) (Table 47-1).

## Antiarrhythmic Drugs

Class IC sodium channel blockers (flecainide, propafenone, pilsicainide) produce the most pronounced ST-segment elevation secondary to strong use-dependent blocking of fast  $I_{Na}$  due to their slow dissociation from the sodium channels.<sup>23-28</sup> Pilsicainide, a pure class IC drug developed in Japan, is thought to more strongly induce ST-segment elevation than flecainide, which is widely used throughout the world and mildly blocks  $I_{to}$ .