



Brief Report

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# A rare genetic variant in PRDM16 is associated with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome with complex accessory pathway characteristics and left ventricular non-compaction cardiomyopathy

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## Abstract

Not only has Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome been associated with congenital cardiac abnormalities and cardiomyopathies, but familial clustering of Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome has also been reported. Despite these well-known associations, direct genetic aetiology is rarely implicated in patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome. We report a 17-year-old girl with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction cardiomyopathy due to a rare genetic variant in PR-domain containing protein 16. The report is supplemented by a comprehensive review of literature on association between PRDM16, left ventricular non-compaction and Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome.

## Background

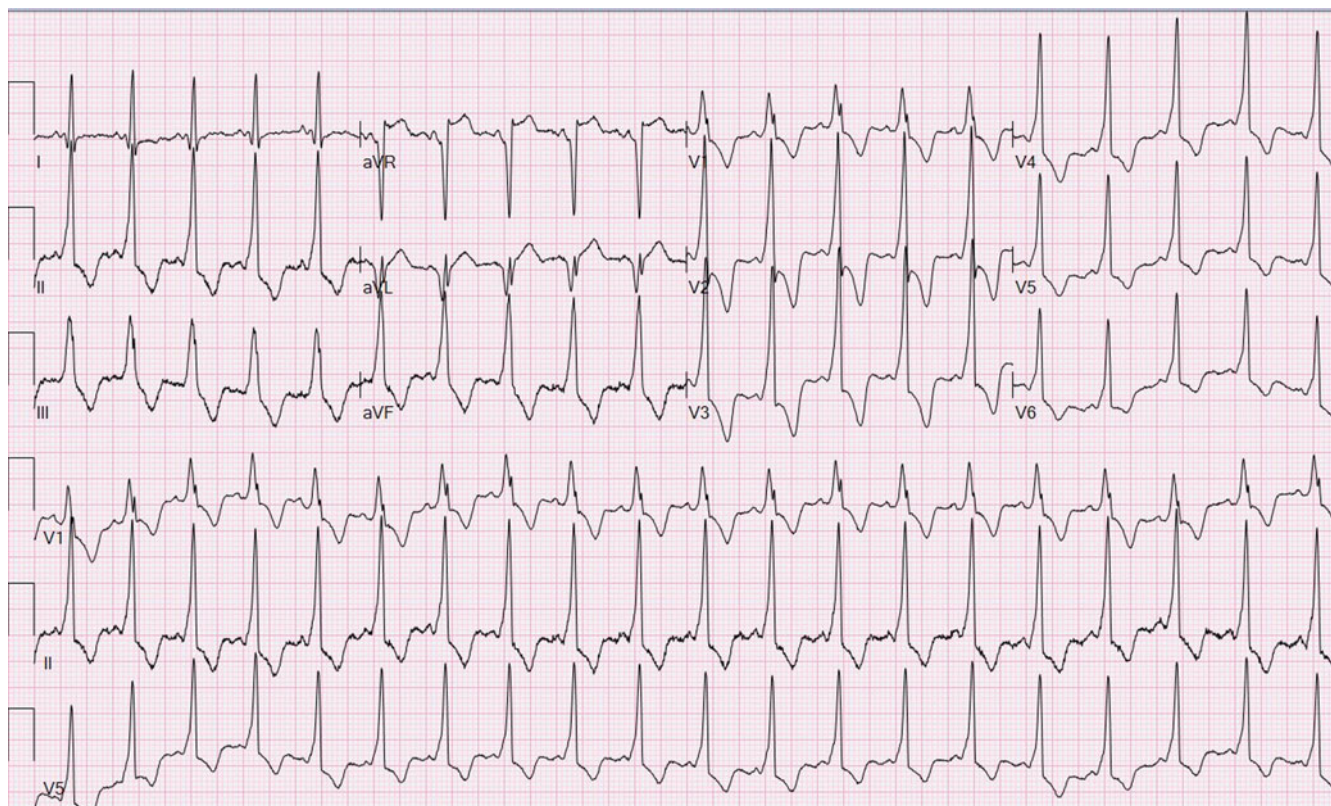
Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome has been associated with congenital cardiac abnormalities such as corrected transposition of great arteries <sup>1</sup> and Ebstein’s anomaly of tricuspid valve <sup>2</sup> and cardiomyopathies including left ventricular non-compaction and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. <sup>3,4</sup> Familial clustering of Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome has also been reported. <sup>5</sup> Despite these well-known associations, direct genetic aetiology is rarely implicated in patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome. <sup>6</sup> We report a 17-year-old girl with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction cardiomyopathy due to a rare genetic variant in PR-domain containing protein 16 (PRDM16). The report is supplemented by a comprehensive review of literature.

## Case report

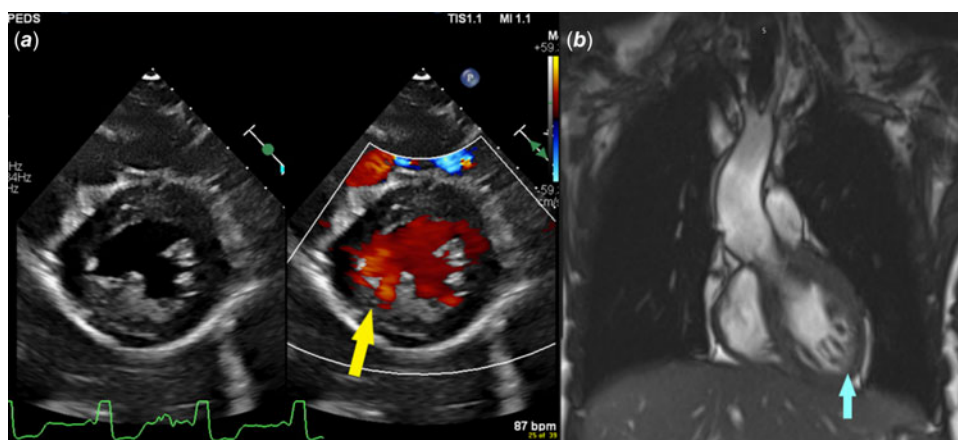
A 17-year-old girl presented with palpitations and Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern on electrocardiogram (Figure 1). Her echocardiogram was suggestive of left ventricular non-compaction with preserved ejection fraction (Figure 2A, Video 1). This was confirmed on cardiac magnetic resonance imaging per criteria proposed by Petersen et al (Figure 2B, Video 2). <sup>7</sup> She underwent an exercise stress test during which pre-excitation persisted at a peak heart rate of 171 beats per minute suggesting a possible high-risk pathway. She subsequently underwent an electrophysiology study during which orthodromic reentrant tachycardia was induced (cycle length of 460 msec) with programmed atrial stimulation. On decremental atrial pacing, the accessory pathway block cycle length was < 200 milliseconds and the shortest preexcited RR interval during atrial fibrillation measured 174 msec (Figure 3), findings which confirmed the pathway to be high risk. The episode of atrial fibrillation resulted in haemodynamic instability and required immediate cardioversion. Mapping was therefore only performed during pre-excited sinus rhythm. Earliest ventricular activation during sinus rhythm was noted over a broad area in mid coronary sinus and superolateral mitral annulus. However, application of radiofrequency energy at these sites was not successful in eliminating pre-excitation (Figure 4). She was started on sotalol until she underwent another EP study a month later. This time, the earliest ventricular activation during sinus rhythm was recorded over a broad area located from 2 to 4 o’clock along the mitral valve annulus. Empiric radiofrequency ablation was performed at the site. Orthodromic reentrant tachycardia was induced following initial ablations (Figure 5A), but no tachycardia could be induced following consolidation of the site. No ventriculoatrial conduction was noted following consolidation. Anterograde accessory pathway conduction, however, persisted, but antegrade pathway block occurred at an atrial

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**Figure 1.** 12-lead electrocardiogram shows ventricular pre-excitation with left anterior pathway location.



**Figure 2.** Panel A: parasternal short axis 2D echocardiographic still frame image with colour Doppler shows left ventricular non-compaction. With colour, flow is noted within crypts. Panel B: the diagnosis is confirmed on a cardiac MRI which shows a ratio of non-compacted mass to total mass of 34 % (> 25% diagnostic of non-compaction).

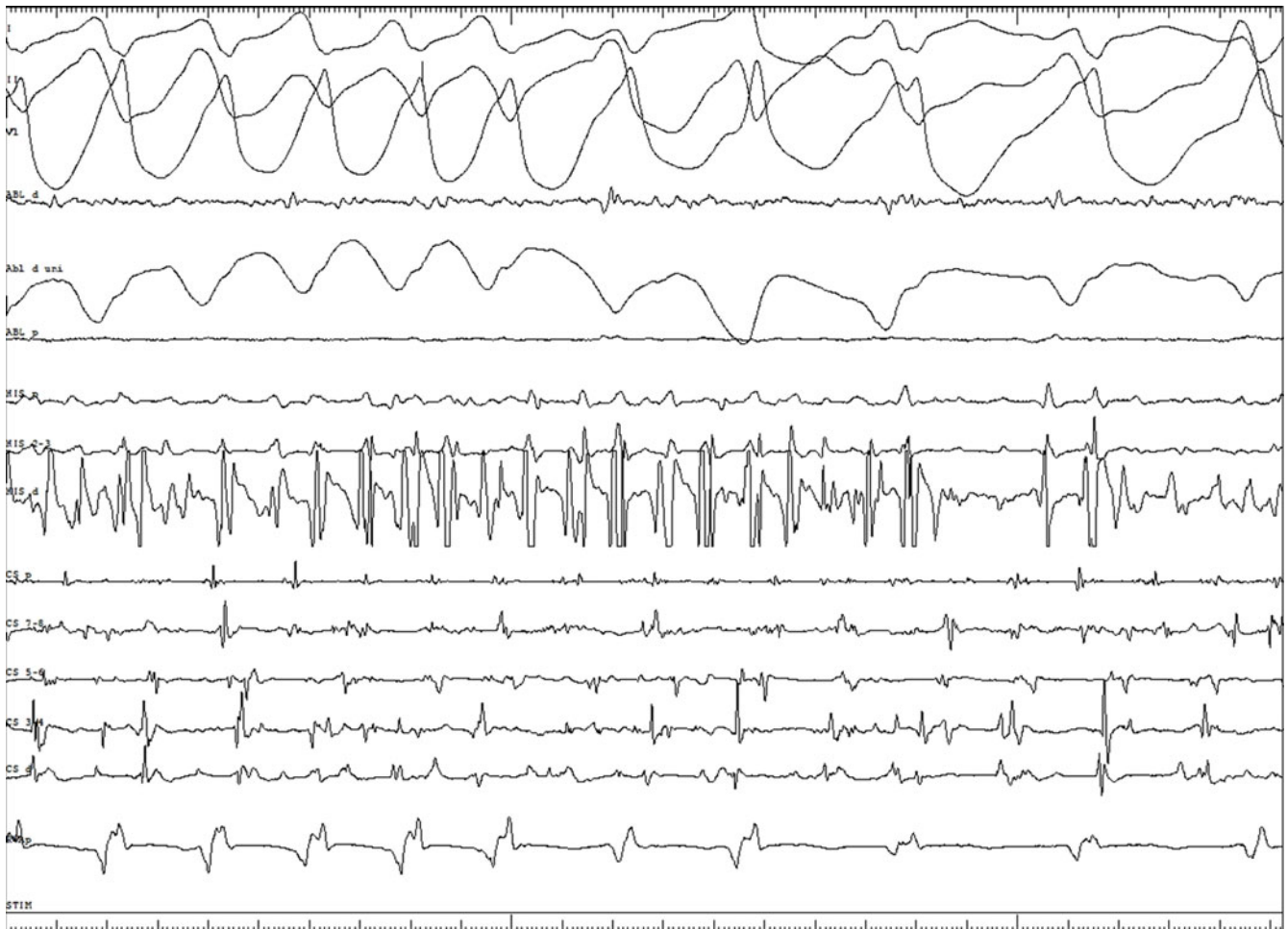
pacing cycle length of 450 msec suggesting that the pathway had been modified. Eighteen months following the second ablation, the patient presented to the emergency department in supraventricular tachycardia, which was terminated with adenosine (Figure 5B). She is currently treated with flecainide 75 mg twice daily and is doing well.

The family history was negative for arrhythmias or cardiomyopathies. Genetic testing (Invitae arrhythmia and cardiomyopathy panel, San Francisco, CA) revealed a variant of uncertain significance in the *PRDM16* (c.2666C > T, p.Pro889Leu). This sequence change replaces proline with leucine at codon 889 of the *PRDM16* protein. This missense mutational change has been observed in individuals with Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome.<sup>8</sup> There is also preliminary

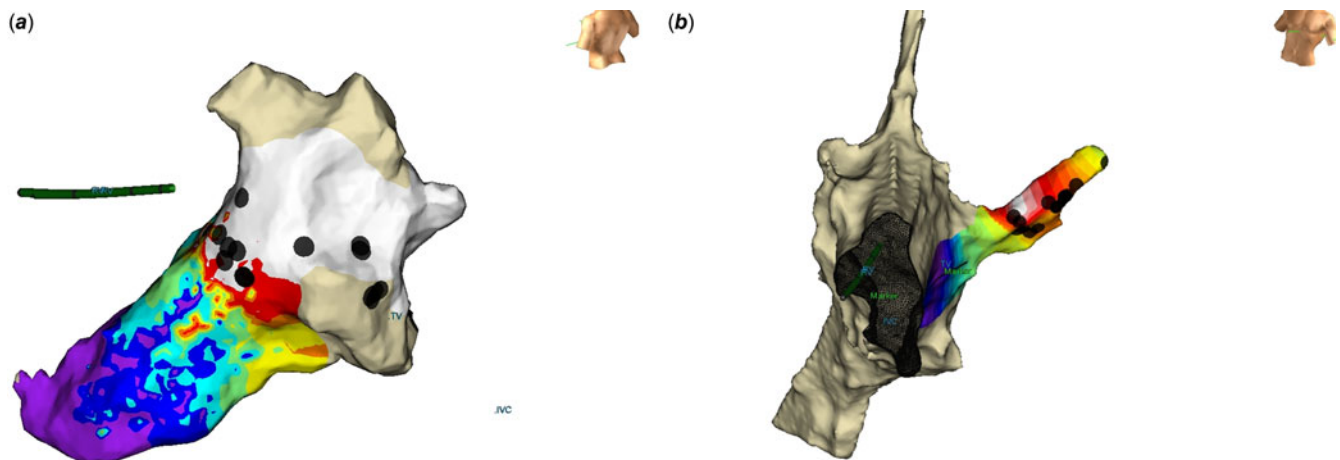
evidence supporting a correlation with autosomal dominant left ventricular non-compaction (MedGen UID: 349005) and dilated cardiomyopathy (OMIM: 615373). This variant is present in population databases (rs201814961, gnomAD 0.03%). ClinVar also contains an entry for this variant (Variation ID: 487607).

She lives with her adoptive parents and has 5 half-siblings from the same biological mother but different fathers. These siblings have undergone testing and have had negative genetic testing, electrocardiograms, and echocardiograms. She also has a full biological sibling who lives with her biological father. She is, however, not in contact with her biological family, and it is therefore not known whether her full biological sibling and her biological parents have been tested.





**Figure 3.** Shortest preexcited RR interval during atrial fibrillation measures 174 msec suggesting a high-risk pathway.

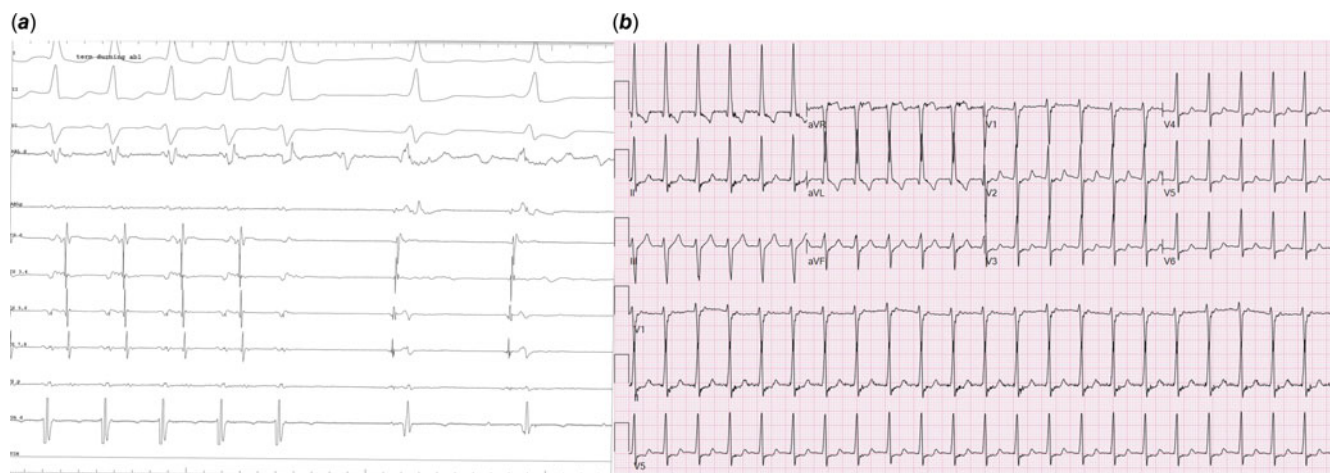


**Figure 4.** Broad area of RF ablation along the lateral mitral annulus (Panel A) and coronary sinus (Panel B) failed to eliminate pre-excitation.

## Discussion

The prevalence of Wolff–Parkinson–White varies from 3 to 11% in patients with left ventricular non-compaction,<sup>3,9,10,11</sup> which is much higher than the estimated 0.1–0.3% prevalence reported in the general population.<sup>12</sup> It is hypothesised that primitive AV connections can persist in patients with left ventricular

non-compaction due to an arrest in cardiac development, resulting in direct continuity between the atrial and ventricular myocardium across the fibrous annulus.<sup>13</sup> More importantly, in a large cohort of patients with left ventricular non-compaction, 84% of patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern were reported to have cardiac dysfunction compared to 52% of those without Wolff–Parkinson–



**Figure 5.** Panel a shows loss of retrograde pathway conduction with RF ablation during the second EP study. Panel B shows narrow QRS SVT (orthodromic reentrant tachycardia) 18 months after second ablation which required adenosine for termination.

White pattern suggesting that ventricular pre-excitation could be associated with a risk of cardiac decompensation in patients with left ventricular non-compaction.<sup>3</sup>

The familial form constitutes approximately 20–40% of all patients with left ventricular non-compaction.<sup>14</sup> The first genetic mutation reported in children with left ventricular non-compaction involved the *TAFAZZIN* gene in patients with Barth syndrome.<sup>15</sup> However, accumulating genetic data indicates that left ventricular non-compaction is genetically heterogeneous<sup>16</sup> with mutations in *MYH7*, *TTN*, and *MYBPC3* being the most common.<sup>17</sup> Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome is mostly sporadic with rare reports of genetic associations.<sup>6,8</sup> The gain-of-function mutation in *PRKAG2*, which encodes the gamma-2 regulatory subunit of adenosine monophosphate activated protein kinase, is most commonly implicated in familial Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is often an associated finding in these patients.<sup>18</sup> In addition, variants in genes associated with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy such as *MYH6* (c.5653G > A; p.Glu1885Lys) and *MYH7* have also been associated with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome.<sup>19,20</sup>

*PRDM16* (positive regulatory domain 16) functions as a compact myocardium-enriched transcription factor and is involved in the activation of genes required for compact myocardium growth and in the repression of genes associated with trabeculae formation. In *PRDM16* knockout mice, the development of left ventricular non-compaction likely results from a shift in the transcriptional profile of compact cardiomyocytes.<sup>21</sup> Consistent with data from *PRDM16* knockout mice, *PRDM16* mutations have been associated with non-syndromic forms of left ventricular non-compaction in humans.<sup>22</sup> In particular, truncating variants in *PRDM16* have been associated with severe left ventricular non-compaction.<sup>23</sup> The frequency of *PRDM16* variants in patients with left ventricular non-compaction has been estimated at 0.5 to 4%.<sup>24,25</sup>

Besides association with left ventricular non-compaction, patients with *PRDM16* mutation have been noted to have Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern and supraventricular tachycardia.<sup>8</sup> The first reported patient was Caucasian who carried a *de novo* missense mutation [c.2666C > T, p. (Pro889Leu)], which is identical to the mutation carried by our patient. The second reported patient was Hispanic and had an inherited missense mutation [c.2855C > T, p. (Thr952Met)]. He also had atrial septal

defect, ventricular septal defect, and hypothyroidism. They both, however, did not have any evidence of cardiomyopathy. There are two other submissions in ClinVar of *PRDM16* mutations in patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome including [c.1642C > A (p.Pro548Thr)] and [c.706G > A (p.Asp236Asn)]. The second patient also had left ventricular non-compaction. Thus, there is accumulating evidence that genetic mutations in *PRDM16* can be associated with both Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction. This, however, is the first detailed report where a genetic mutation in *PRDM16* resulted in a combined phenotype of both Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction.

Less than 100 patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White and left ventricular non-compaction have been reported till date. Characteristics of these patients with both Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction are summarised in Table 1. It is noteworthy that despite left ventricular non-compaction being left-sided disease, the accessory pathways in patients with left ventricular non-compaction can either be left or right sided. Brescia et al and Paszkowska et al each described a patient each with Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern within their left ventricular non-compaction cohorts, but no accessory pathway was identified on the electrophysiology study suggesting that the patients had pseudo pre-excitation.<sup>10,46</sup> Howard et al reported that 12 out of their cohort of 38 patients with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome and left ventricular non-compaction underwent an ablation procedure with a reported acute success rate of 83%. Four patients with cardiac dysfunction were successfully ablated, with 3 showing improvement in cardiac function.<sup>3</sup> The authors concluded that the presence of an accessory pathway in left ventricular non-compaction contributed to left ventricular dyssynchrony and eventually systolic dysfunction, which could increase the risk of arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death. They emphasised that ablation could improve left ventricular ejection fraction in these patients, implicating Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern as a bad prognostic indicator in patients with left ventricular non-compaction.<sup>3</sup>

Electrophysiological characteristics of *PRDM16*-associated accessory pathways have not been well characterised. Our patient had a broad and likely epicardial pathway that could not be completely ablated despite two attempted ablations by experienced operators suggesting that accessory pathway ablation in patients

**Table 1.** Characteristics of patients with WPW and LVNC

Study author	Age (years)	Gender	Race	Arrhythmias	EF	Pathway location/EP study and ablation	Cardiac anomalies	Other anomalies
Ichida et al <sup>26</sup>	4	M	A	None	55%	Not reported	None	
Ichida et al <sup>26</sup>	2.9	M	A	None	↓	Not reported	None	Cataract
Ichida et al <sup>26</sup>	0.2	F	A	SVT	66%	Not reported	None	
Ichida et al <sup>26</sup>	0.2	F	A	SVT	↓ 41%	Not reported	PHTN	Facial dysmorphism
Hussein et al <sup>27</sup>	5.5	F	Not known	VE	N	Not performed	Mitral regurgitation, septal dyssynchrony	
Yasukawa et al <sup>28</sup>	0.75	F	A	VE, VF	↓	Not reported	None	Sudden death due to VF
Ozkutlu et al <sup>29</sup>	5	M	A	SVT	56%		Congestive heart failure	
Nihei et al <sup>30</sup>	0.75	F	A		↓↓	Right AS	None	Sudden death
Nihei et al <sup>30</sup>	0.5	F	A	None	81%	Right AS	Cardiomegaly on CXR	
Nihei et al <sup>30</sup>	9	F	A	None	N	Right AS	None	
Jost et al <sup>31</sup> (n = 5)			Not known	Not reported		Not reported	Ebstein's anomaly	
Celiker et al <sup>32</sup>	7	M	A	VE, SVT	↓	Not reported	None	
El-Menyar et al <sup>33</sup>			A			EP study and catheter ablation		
Fichet et al <sup>34</sup>	18	F	Not reported	Aborted VF arrest, NSVTx2, SVT	N	Left free wall AP (APERP: 290 ms), successful RF ablation, inducible polymorphic VT, ICD	None	Melnick Fraser Syndrome (Facial dysmorphism, deafness, VUR)
Munehisa et al <sup>35</sup>	24	F (pregnant)	A	None	↓ 45%	Not reported	Restrictive dysfunction during pregnancy	Genetic testing negative
Salerno et al <sup>36</sup>	0.5	M	Not reported	Bradycardia	N	Moderate risk pathway on transoesophageal EP study, no inducible arrhythmia	LVH	Died after an episode of respiratory distress
Ho et al <sup>37</sup>	14	M	AA	None	N	Right posterior pathway successfully ablated using RF, no inducible arrhythmia during EP study	None	ICD also implanted
Yoshinga et al <sup>38</sup>	0.12	M	A	SVT	↓ 50%	EP study and ablation, pathway location not reported	None	Rapid decline in EF requiring heart failure therapy to stabilize
Garcia-Diaz et al <sup>39</sup>	0.1	M	C	None	↓ 52%	Not reported	HCM with biventricular hypertrophy	Mitochondrial disorder

Table 1. (Continued)

Malagoli et al <sup>40</sup>	14	M	AA	None		Left posteroseptal AP	Ebstein's anomaly, BAV	
Alper et al <sup>41</sup>	28	F	A	Inducible ORT during EP study	65%	ParaHisian pathway successfully ablated using RF (APERP: 270 msec)	Grade 1 diastolic dysfunction	Fabry disease
Finsterer et al <sup>42</sup>	66	M	C	VE, NSVT	N	Left lateral AP but ablation not performed during EP study due to bizarre conduction system	Enlarged atria, LVH, diastolic dysfunction, hypertension	LHON (m.3460G>A), ICD proposed but refused by the patient
Finsterer et al <sup>42,43</sup>	48	M	C					LHON (m.3460G>A), sudden death
Moceri et al <sup>44</sup>	58	M	Not reported	AF, VF	↓	EP study performed but pathway location not reported	Enlarged LV	
Sengul et al <sup>11</sup> (n = 2)			A		>45%	EP study and catheter ablation (n = 1)		
Chin et al <sup>45</sup>	4	F	Not reported	SVT, VT, VF	↓	Not reported		
Paszowska et al <sup>10</sup>			Not reported	SVT	N	No AP noted on EP study (pseudo pre-excitation)		
Brescia et al <sup>46</sup> (n = 20)				SVT (n = 6), WPW, inducible VT (n = 4), spontaneous monomorphic VT (n = 2)		EP study with successful SVT ablation (n = 5), monomorphic VT ablation (n = 2), ventricular stimulation study (n = 11), pseudo pre-excitation (n = 1)		ICD implantation (n = 11), transplant (n = 2), sudden death (n = 1)
Howard et al <sup>3</sup> (n = 38)	0.3 - 12.6	55% M	34% C 37% AA 29% H	45% SVT, 47% Dyssynchrony	↓ 84%		Enlarged LV 45%, HCM 13%, Mixed 13%	Sudden death (n = 1) Cardiac death or transplantation (n = 8, 21%)

WPW = Wolff-Parkinson-White; LVNC = Left ventricular non-compaction; M = Male; F = Female; A = Asian, AA = African; C = Caucasian; H = Hispanic; SVT = Supraventricular tachycardia; VE = Ventricular ectopy; NSVT = Non-sustained ventricular tachycardia; VF = Ventricular fibrillation; AF = Atrial fibrillation; EF = Ejection fraction; N = Normal; PHTN = Pulmonary hypertension; CXR = Chest X-ray; VUR = Vesicoureteral reflux; AS = Anteroseptal; APERP = Accessory pathway effective refractory period; ORT = Orthodromic reentrant tachycardia; RF = Radiofrequency; LVH = Left ventricular hypertrophy; HCM = Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy; BAV = Bicuspid aortic valve; LV = Left ventricle; ICD = Implantable cardioverter defibrillator; LHON = Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy.



with *PRDM16* mutation associated with Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome, and left ventricular non-compaction may be challenging due to complex pathway characteristics. These findings inform the need for systematic evaluation of association between *PRDM16* mutation, left ventricular non-compaction, and Wolff–Parkinson–White pattern.

**Supplementary material.** The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1047951124036631>.

**Data availability statement.** The majority of data associated with this study are provided in text and figures. Additional data will be made available upon request.

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**Competing interests.** All authors have reported that they have no relationships relevant to the contents of this paper to disclose.

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