

- Digitalis toxicity



AFib with very slow ventricular rate and characteristic ST-T findings suggesting digitalis toxicity

- Digitalis toxicity is associated with increased automaticity and decreased conduction and can cause almost any type of cardiac arrhythmia or conduction disturbance except BBB. Typical abnormalities include:
 - Paroxysmal atrial tachycardia (PAT) with block
 - AFIB with complete heart block (regular RR intervals)
 - 2° or 3° AV block
 - Complete heart block with accelerated junctional rhythm (AJR) or accelerated idioventricular rhythm (AIVR)
 - Biphasic VT with alternating QRS complexes from beat to beat

Digitalis toxicity should be strongly suspected when there is a typical rhythm disturbance plus typical ST-T changes of digitalis effect (sagging ST segment depression with upward concavity).

Digitalis toxicity may be exacerbated by hypokalemia, hypomagnesemia, and hypercalcemia.

Electrical cardioversion of AFIB should be performed with caution in the setting of digitalis toxicity since protracted asystole or VF can occur. Digitalis levels should always be checked prior to elective electrical cardioversion.