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SCMR Seeks to Bring Awareness to a Disease with No Cause

The Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance bring awareness to Sarcoidosis this April

MOUNT ROYAL, NJ – April 4, 2019 – [Sarcoidosis is a systemic inflammatory disease](#) that typically effects the lungs and lymph nodes and that can affect the heart, leading to possible arrhythmias and eventually heart failure. To date, sarcoidosis has no known cause. [The Society of Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance \(SCMR\)](#) is promoting awareness of the disease this month, that is also recognized as Sarcoidosis Awareness Month. While electrocardiograms, echocardiography, and endomyocardial biopsy are standard diagnostic tests for Sarcoidosis, cardiac MRI has the advantage of noninvasively assessing the entire myocardium for evidence of the disease. [SCMR](#) is a Society dedicated to improving cardiovascular health by advancing the field of cardiovascular magnetic resonance (CMR).

“The ability to noninvasively assess changes in the heart tissue while at the same time assessing overall cardiac function is a major advantage in the diagnosis and care of cardiac Sarcoidosis,” said Dr. Jennifer Jordan, fellow SCMR member and Committee Member. “We now have many MRI-conditional devices that allow patients who have cardiac Sarcoidosis and an implanted device to undergo a cardiac MRI for either clinical care or research.”

Sarcoidosis is a disease characterized by the formation of tiny clumps of inflammatory cells in one or more organs of the body. When the immune system goes into overdrive and too many of these clumps form, they can interfere with an organ’s structure and function, especially the heart. CMR - or heart MRI - is able to confirm cardiac involvement, assess degree of inflammatory activity and assess response to treatment, and follow left ventricular function. While electrocardiograms, echocardiography and endomyocardial biopsy are standard diagnostic tests for Sarcoidosis, cardiac MRI has the advantage of noninvasively assessing the entire myocardium for evidence of the disease.

Disease presentation and severity varies widely among patients with the most common symptoms being swollen lymph nodes, skin sores and lumps in the organs. In some cases, the disease goes away on its own where in others, the disease may not progress clinically, but individuals will still suffer from some symptoms that challenge their quality of life. The rest of patients—up to a third of people diagnosed with the disease—will require long-term treatment. Sarcoidosis is considered chronic in people whose disease remains active for more than 2-5 years; in this population Sarcoidosis can be debilitating and life-threatening. In 2008, comedian and actor Bernard Jeffrey McCullough, better known by his stage name Bernie Mac, passed away after battling Sarcoidosis for some time.

[Cardiac magnetic resonance imaging \(CMR\)](#) is an innovative, noninvasive, radiation free method of viewing the heart, heart valves, arteries and veins of the body. Heart MRI uses powerful magnets and advanced computers to obtain both movies and still pictures of the cardiovascular system. These images are highly detailed, promoting accuracy, diagnostic and prognostic power and overall safety, often taking the place of other methods that medical providers use to view the heart. Medical providers use a heart MRI to answer questions about diseases that involve the heart or surrounding vascular system, utilizing the capabilities of a heart MRI to assess virtual heart biopsies, high-resolution perfusion and advanced blood flow analysis. An MRI of the heart can be done with newborns to adults after being evaluated by a physician or licensed heart specialist.

For more information on the use of heart MRIs, including [patient resources](#), and [background on the benefits and importance of cardiac MRI](#), visit scmr.org.

About the Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance (SCMR)

The Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance (SCMR) is the recognized representative and advocate for physicians, scientists and technologists who work in the field of cardiovascular magnetic resonance (CMR). SCMR is the principal international, independent organization committed to the further development of CMR through education, quality control, research, and training.

Membership has grown to over 2,600 - which includes cardiologists, radiologists, technologists, scientists, engineers and administrators from around the world.

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