

Country cardiograms case 52

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A 46-year-old man is brought to the emergency department, by emergency medical personnel, with acute-onset retrosternal chest pain that the patient describes as feeling like a “rock” on his chest. He reports that the pain developed suddenly while he was at rest 90 minutes before presentation and radiated to his left arm. The patient also reports a feeling of faintness and excessive sweating. He has had no similar episodes previous to this. His only relevant medical history is a smoking history of 20 packs per year. He is taking no regular medications, and denies use of cocaine or amphetamine.

On physical examination, the patient is mildly obese and appears to

be in mild distress. His heart rate is 57 beats/min and blood pressure is 107/66 mm Hg, equal in both arms. The remainder of the examination is unremarkable. At the time of the initial assessment, laboratory investigations are pending. The patient’s initial electrocardiogram (ECG) is shown in Figure 1. What changes in the ECG warrant concern, and why? How would you manage this patient’s treatment?

For the answer, see page 156.

Competing interests: None declared.

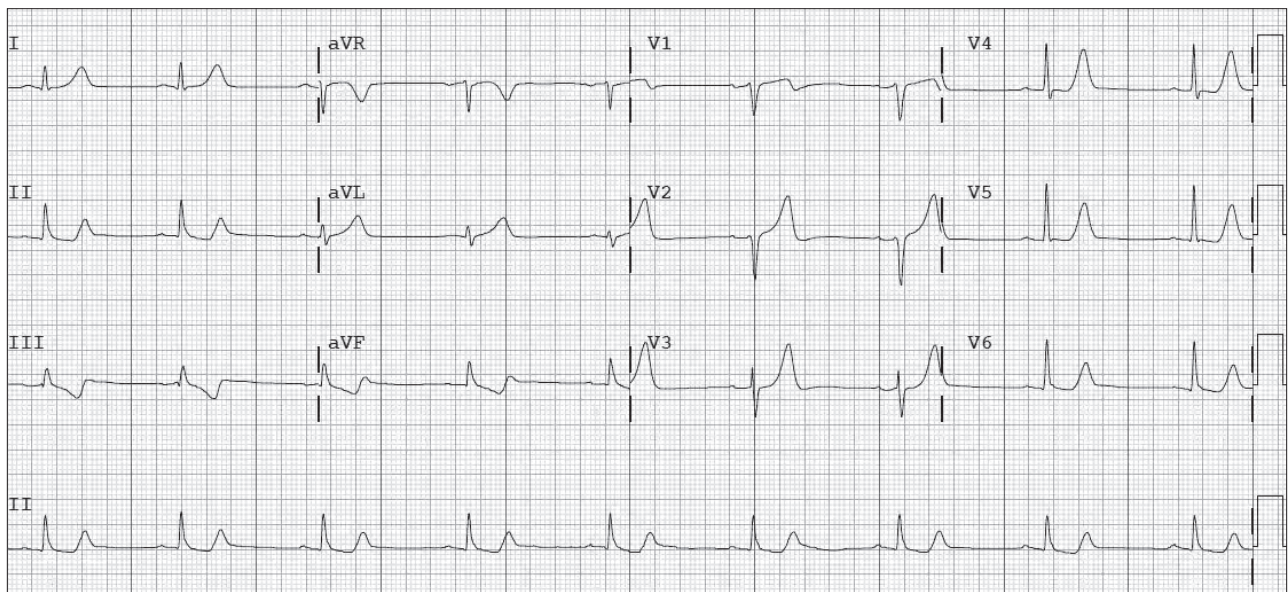


Fig. 1. Electrocardiogram in a 46-year-old man with chest pain.

“Country cardiograms” is a regular feature of *CJRM*. We present an electrocardiogram and discuss the case in a rural context. Please submit cases to Suzanne Kingsmill, *CJRM*, 45 Overlea Blvd., P.O. Box 22015, Toronto ON M4H 1N9; cjrm@cjrm.net.