

The etiological spectrum of congenital adrenal hyperplasia based on molecular genetic analyses

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Introduction

- Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) is a group of autosomal recessive disorders characterized by a defect in cortisol biosynthesis.
- The most common form of CAH is the 21-hydroxylase deficiency (21-OHD). However, the incidence and the etiologic spectrum of other forms of CAH were not reported in Korea.

Objectives

- To describe the etiological distribution of CAH
- To evaluate the clinical characteristics and age at first presentation of CAH in a single academic center

Methods

- This study included 189 patients with all forms of CAH.
- The diagnosis was confirmed by the clinical features, biochemical data, and molecular genetic analysis for the *CYP21A2*, *StAR*, *CYP17A1*, and *POR* genes.

Results

- Frequencies of each form of congenital adrenal hyperplasia.

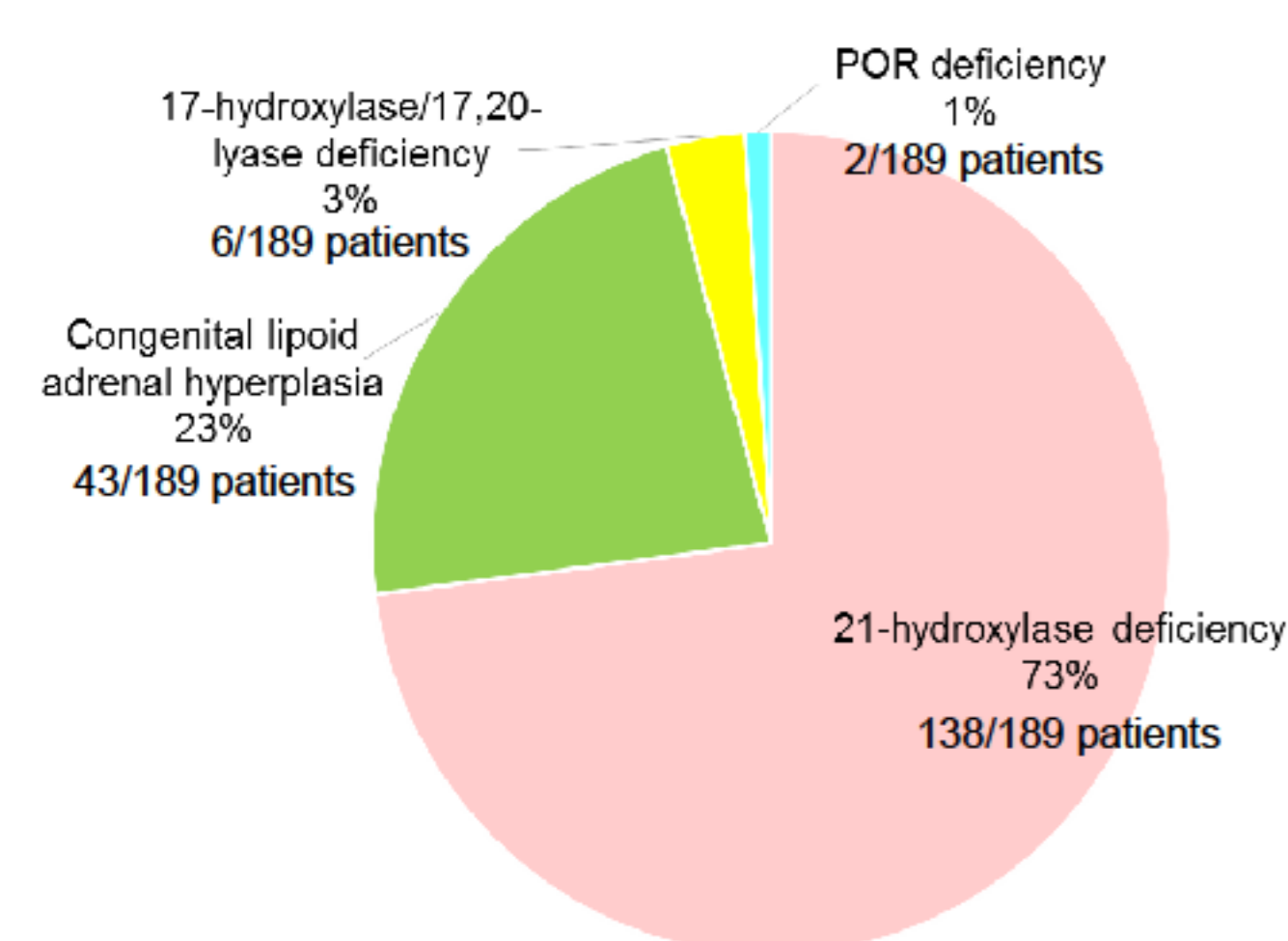


Fig. 1. Of a total of 189 patients, 138 patients (73%) from 128 families were 21-OHD (104 salt-losing, 33 simple-virilizing, and 1 non-classic forms), 43 (23%) from 41 unrelated families had *StAR* defect, six (3%) had 17-hydroxylase/17,20-lyase deficiency, and two (1%) had P450 oxidoreductase (POR) deficiency.

- Clinical characteristics and molecular analysis of *CYP21A2* in 138 patients with 21-OHD.

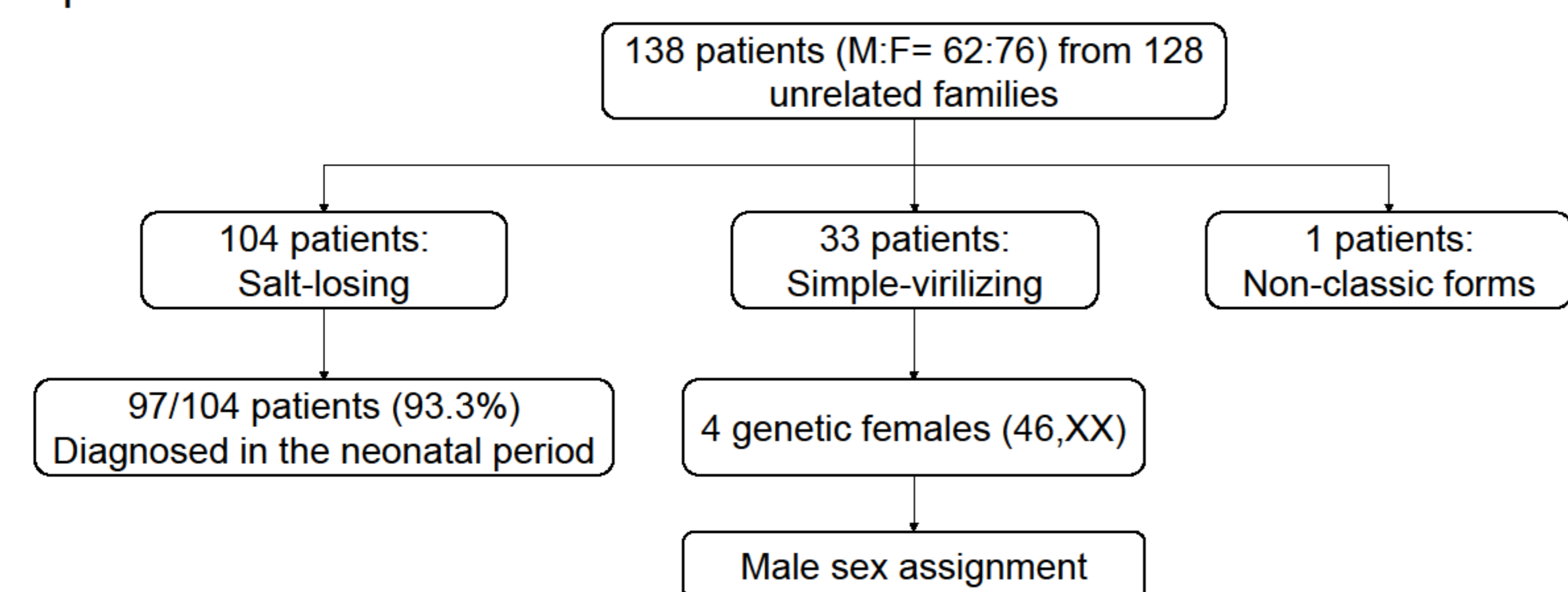


Fig. 2. Outcomes of patients with 21-OHD. 97 patients with salt-losing 21-OHD (97/104, 93.3%) were diagnosed in the neonatal period. Most girls of 21-OHD (75/76, 98.7%) presented with genital virilisation, whereas most boys (38/62, 61.3%) presented with salt-losing phenomenon within the first month of life. Four genetic female (46,XX) with simple virilizing form of 21-OHD were assigned as male because of delayed diagnosis.

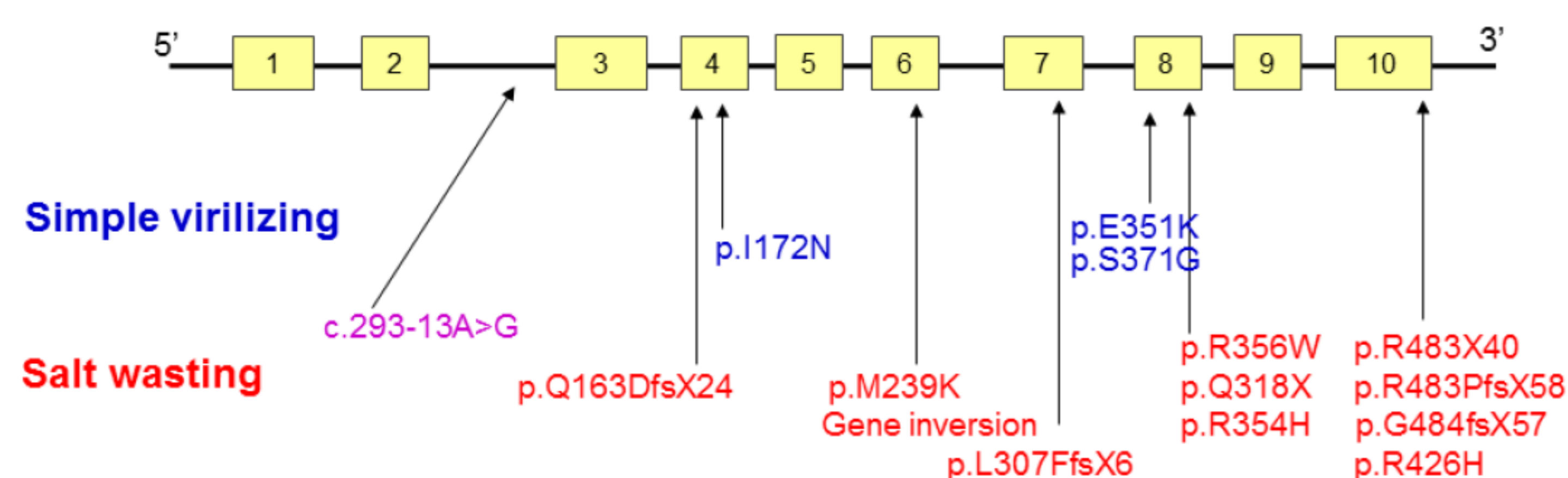


Fig. 3. Mutation spectrum of *CYP21A2* gene in patients with 21-OHD according to clinical phenotypes.

- 43 patients with congenital lipid adrenal hyperplasia (CLAH) from 41 unrelated families
 - 8 different mutations in the *StAR* gene from 41 unrelated families
 - c.772C>T (p.Q258*): The most common *StAR* mutation in Korea (87.8%) by founder effect

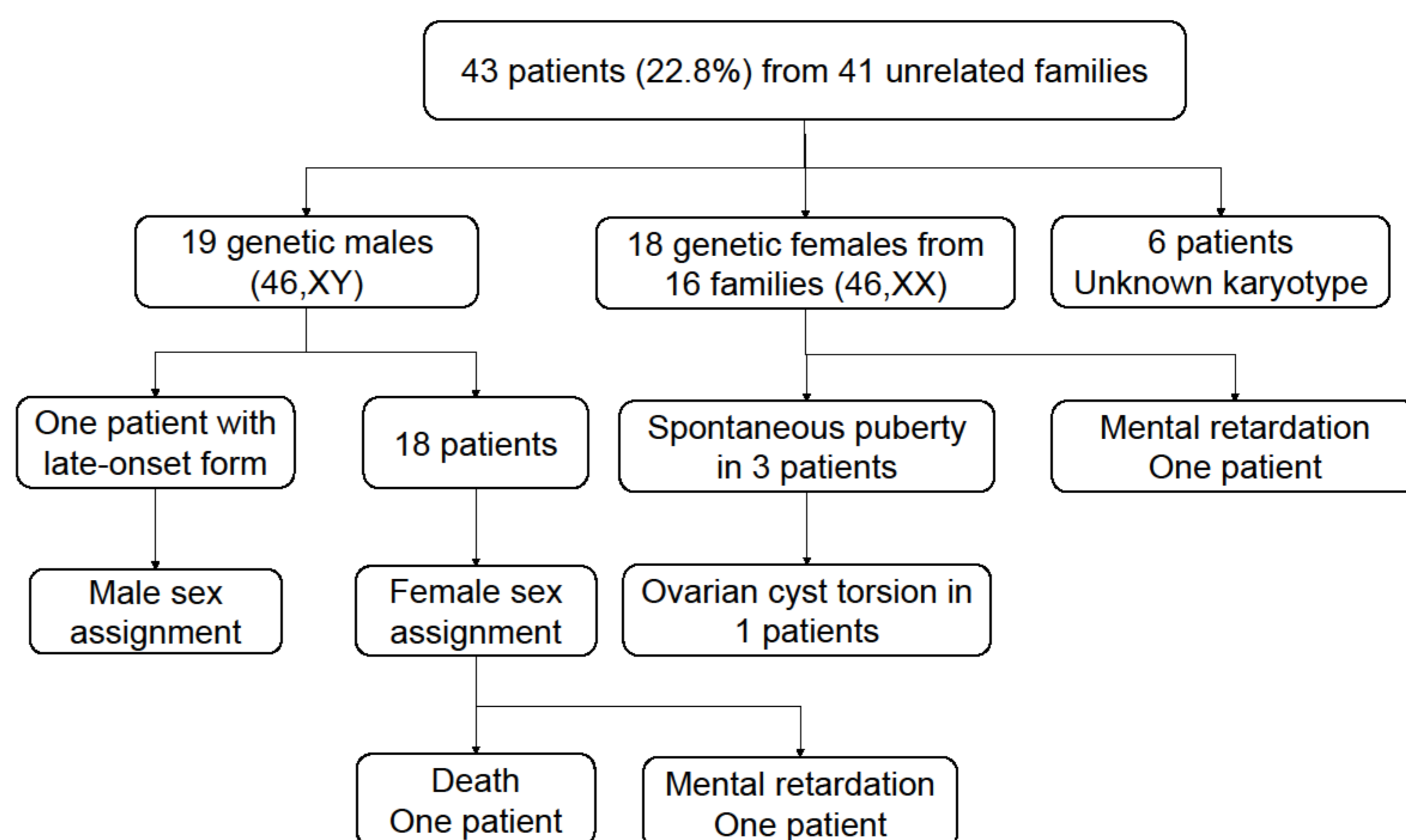


Fig. 4. Outcomes of patients with CLAH. Most patients (40/43, 93%) with *StAR* defect presented with adrenal crisis in the neonatal period, while 3 late-onset patients showed skin hyperpigmentation after age 2 years.

- Six patients with 17 α -hydroxylase/17,20-lyase deficiency
 - Hypertension and primary amenorrhea during adolescent period

| | Case 1 | Case 2 | Case 3 | Case 4 | Case 5 | Case 6 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Age at diagnosis | 14y 11mo | 19y 2mo | 15y | 18y | 42y | 14y |
| Height SDS/weight SDS | -0.61/-0.16 | -1.50/-2.57 | 3.08/1.37 | 0.85/2.60 | 1.85/1.95 | 2.00/1.88 |
| BP, mmHg | 180/100 | 171/115 | 170/100 | 140/90 | 208/150 | 150/90 |
| Na/K, mEq/L | 137/3.5 | 133/3.7 | 145/3.5 | 147/3.0 | 144/3.7 | 140/2.1 |
| LH/FSH, mIU/mL | 38.3/123 | 61.5/60.4 | 26.7/13.2 | 15.1/6.6 | 6.8/37.8 | 20/52 |
| Estradiol, pg/mL | 10.0 | 10.0 | 24 | 11 | 12 | 18 |
| Testosterone, ng/mL | 0.05 | 0.08 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | ND |
| Progesterone, ng/mL (0.1-1.3) | 10.7 | 2.4 | 6.7 | 7.0 | 16.5 | 9.9 |
| ACTH, pg/mL (0-60) | 162 | 510 | 211 | 189 | 344 | 34.6 |
| Cortisol, μ g/dL (5-25) | 1.1 | 3.3 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 1.4 |
| 11-DOC ng/mL (0.03-0.33) | ND | ND | 3.5 | 1.48 | 2.3 | 0.51 |
| Renin, ng/mL/hr (0.68-1.36) | 0.16 | 3.5 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Aldosterone, pg/mL (70-300) | 298 | 215 | 136 | 70 | 176 | 59.8 |
| Karyotype | 46,XY | 46,XY | 46,XX | 46,XX | 46,XY | 46,XX |
| <i>CYP17A1</i> mutation | p.H373L/p.H373L | p.H373L/p.W406L | p.H373L/p.Y329fs | p.H373L/p.Y329fs | p.H373L/p.Y329fs | p.H373L/p.A174E |

- Two girls with P450 oxidoreductase (POR) deficiency
 - Adrenal insufficiency, ambiguous genitalia, and craniosynostosis

| | Case 1 | Case 2 |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Age/Sex | 7 months/Female | 3 months/Female |
| Skeletal features | Craniosynostosis, Radiohumeral synostosis | None |
| Genitalia | Clitoromegaly | Partial fusion of labia majora |
| Maternal virilization | Denied | Not assessed |
| ACTH, pg/mL | 290 | 415 |
| Cortisol, μ g/dL | 9.3 \rightarrow 9.6 | 13.4 \rightarrow 26.2 |
| 17-OHP, ng/dL | 2240 \rightarrow 3630 | 28 \rightarrow 83 |
| DHEA-S, μ g/dL (5-20) | 9.9 | 43.0 |
| Testosterone, ng/dL | 0.8 | 0.1 |
| Renin, ng/ml/hr (2.35-37) | 1.4 | 6.1 |
| Karyotype | 46,XX | 46,XX |
| <i>POR</i> gene | p.R457H/p.I444fs*449 | p.R457H/p.R457H |

Conclusions

- The most common cause of CAH was 21-OHD. Interestingly, lipid CAH is the second common because of the founder mutation (p.Q258X) in Korea.
- Nationwide surveillance is needed to estimate the incidence and precise distribution of diverse etiology of CAH, though newborn screening for 21-OHD is introduced.

Disclosure statement

The authors have nothing to disclose.