

## **ORIGINAL** ARTICLES

# **CROBET SPECIES TO A THE CONSTRERT SPECE CLINICAl and Genetic Spectrum of Children with Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia** in China

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Objective To report detailed knowledge about the clinical manifestations, ciliary phenotypes, genetic spectrum as well as phenotype/genotype correlation in primary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD) in Chinese children.

**Study design** We recruited 50 Chinese children with PCD. Extensive clinical assessments, nasal nitric oxide, high-speed video analysis, transmission electron microscopy, and genetic testing were performed to characterize the phenotypes and genotypes of these patients.

Results Common clinical features included chronic wet cough (85.4%), laterality defects (70.0%), and neonatal respiratory distress (55.8%). A high prevalence of congenital abnormalities (30.2%, 13/43), observed in patients who underwent comprehensive examination for comorbidities, included thoracic deformity (11.6%, 5/43), congenital heart disease (9.3%, 4/43), and sensorineural deafness (2.3%, 1/43). For 24 children age >6 years, the mean predicted values of forced expiratory volume in 1 second were 87.2%. Bronchiectasis evident on high-resolution computed tomography was reported in 38.1% of patients (16/42). Biallelic mutations (81 total; 57 novel) were identified in 13 genes: *DNAAF3, DNAAF1, DNAH5, DNAH11, CCDC39, CCDC40, CCDC114, CCDC103*, *HYDIN, CCNO*, *DNAI1, OFD1*, and *SPAG1*. Overall, ciliary ultrastructural and beat pattern correlated well with the genotype. However, variable phenotypes were also observed in *CCDC39* and *DNAH5* mutant cilia.

Conclusions This large PCD cohort in China broadens the clinical, ciliary phenotypes, and genetic characteristics of children with PCD. Our findings are roughly consistent with previous studies besides some peculiarities such as high prevalence of associated abnormalities. *(J Pediatr 2020;225:157-65)*.

Frimary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD, Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man: 244400) is an orphan, autosomal-recessive or X-<br>linked disease characterized by abnormal motile ciliary function. <sup>1</sup> As a consequence, PCD often presen linked disease characterized by abnormal motile ciliary function.<sup>[1](#page-7-0)</sup> As a consequence, PCD often presents a variety of clinical manifestations, such as upper and lower airway infection, laterality defects, and infertility.<sup>[2](#page-7-1)</sup> The estimated prevalence of PCD is  $1:10\ 000$  to  $1:40\ 000$  in live-born children.<sup>[3](#page-7-2)</sup>

Currently, there is no single "gold standard" diagnostic test. The European Respiratory Society recommended that diagnosis requires access to a diversity of technically demanding methods, including nasal nitric oxide (nNO), high-speed video analysis (HSVA), transmission electron microscopy (TEM), and genetic testing.<sup>[4](#page-7-3)</sup> It has been reported that inner dynein arms (IDA) defects, combined with microtubular disarrangement (MTD), many of which are associated with biallelic mutations in CCDC39 and CCDC40, have worse pulmonary function,<sup>[5](#page-7-4)</sup> whereas mutations in RSPH1 are usually associated with higher nNO and milder clinical disease.<sup>[6](#page-7-5)</sup> As an easy, inexpensive, and expeditious diagnostic tool for establishing PCD diagnosis, HSVA is proposed as the first-line test and increasingly applied.<sup>[4](#page-7-3)</sup> However, the relationships between clinical manifestations, ciliary ultrastructural defect, genotype, and ciliary beat pattern have not been well established.

Because of the lack of awareness of PCD and the diagnostic methods, the disease is underdiagnosed in China. Currently, limited data are available on the comprehensive description of characteristics or genotypic spectrum in Chinese children. Until now, only 19 Chinese cases (including adult patients) have been reported, in which pathogenic variants were identified.<sup>[7-15](#page-7-6)</sup> In our center, a multidisciplinary team of clinical and laboratory staff determines whether patients have PCD, using clinical history, nNO, HSVA, TEM, and genetic analysis. In the present study, we systematically evaluated the clinical symptoms, ciliary phenotype, and genetic spectrum, as well as the diagnostic characteristics of Chinese children with PCD, who were followed up



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at our center. At the same time, the associations between ciliary beat patterns, ultrastructural defects, and genotypes were also comprehensively determined.

### **Methods**

Patients with symptoms suggestive of PCD, with at least 2 out of 4 key clinical features (laterality defects, unexplained neonatal respiratory distress, year-round daily cough, or nasal congestion) or siblings of confirmed patients were prospectively screened between January 1, 2016 and January 1, 2019 at the Children's Hospital of Fudan University. These patients underwent a standardized diagnostic protocol, including HSVA, TEM, nNO, and genetic testing. The diagnosis of PCD was made according to the European Respira-tory Society guidelines.<sup>[4](#page-7-3)</sup> Confirmed PCD diagnosis required a hallmark ultrastructural defect (ie, dynein arm [DA] defect, outer dynein arms [ODA] defect, IDA defect with MTD, and/ or nonambiguous biallelic mutations in PCD-causing genes). Demographic information, laboratory results including sputum culture, computed tomography, echocardiography, abdominal ultrasound, and pulmonary function test were obtained when enrolled.

#### Measurement of nNO

nNO testing was performed using an EcoMedics CLD88 chemiluminescence NO analyser (Duernten, Switzerland); the measurement of nNO in cooperative children was per-formed by breath hold maneuver as described previously.<sup>[16](#page-8-0)</sup> For children uncooperative (usually less than 5 years old), nasal sampling was performed for 60 seconds during tidal breathing.[17](#page-8-1) Results were reported in nL/min with the following equation: nNO (nL/min) = NO  $(ppb) \times$  sampling rate (mL/min).

#### Transmission Electron Microscopy Examination

Samples of nasal mucosa were fixed in 2.5% glutaraldehyde, and ciliary ultrastructural analysis was carried out by TEM (JEM-1400; Jeol, Tokyo, Japan). TEM was performed as previously described. $11$  Briefly, the nasal mucosa was fixed with glutaraldehyde (2.5% w/v) in 0.1 M sodium cacodylate buffer. Following fixation in osmium tetroxide (1% w/v), samples were dehydrated through graded ethanol series and embedded in epoxy resin. Sections were cut at 50-70 nm thickness and stained with 2% methanolic uranyl acetate and Reynold's lead citrate for analysis.

## High-Speed Video Microscopy Analysis

Nasal tissue was suspended in L-15 medium (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, California). Cilia beat frequency and pattern were recorded at 200 frames/seconds at room temperature ( $25^{\circ}$ C) by a Leica inverted microscope (Leica DMI3000B, Solms, Germany) as described. $11$  HSVA was carried out directly after brushing. The digital recordings were evaluated in a blinded fashion by 2 investigators. To evaluate the abnormalities in ciliary motion, we examined the ciliary beat pattern by using slow motion playback of the video sequence to generate tracings of the ciliary beat; at least 10 edges were analyzed per subject. The ciliary beat pattern was described as follows: normal, immotile, minimal residual movements stiff, restricted, and circular. Repeated nasal brushing was conducted for ciliary ultrastructure and function analysis, when initial results were insufficient or inconclusive.

#### Whole Exome Sequencing and Sanger Sequencing Validation

Genomic DNA was isolated from the peripheral blood of the probands and available family members, using the QIAamp DNA Blood Mini kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany). Whole exome sequencing was performed to search for potential genetic defects at the molecular genetic diagnosis center of Fu-dan University as previously described.<sup>[18](#page-8-3)</sup> Briefly, whole exomes were captured using an Agilent SureSelect Human All ExonV5 Kit (Agilent, Santa Clara, California) and sequenced on an Illumina HiSeq 2000 platform. The sequencing reads were aligned to the human reference genome (UCSC hg19) with Burrows-Wheelchair Aligner v 0.7.9a. After quality control, variants were annotated by Variant Effect Predictor [\(http://asia.ensembl.org/index.](http://asia.ensembl.org/index.html) [html](http://asia.ensembl.org/index.html)) and ANNOVAR [\(http://www.openbioinformatics.](http://www.openbioinformatics.org/annovar) [org/annovar\)](http://www.openbioinformatics.org/annovar) and compared computationally with the list of reported pathogenic variations from the Human Gene Mutation Database (HGMD, professional version). For variations that are not reported pathogenic in the HGMD, our own databases and the Exome Aggregation Consortium, 1000 Genome Project, Genome Aggregation Database, and Single Nucleotide Polymorphism Database were used to filtering out common variants (minor allele frequency >1%). Intronic variants, synonymous variants were also discarded. The protein functional consequence of variants were assessed with SIFT, Provean, PolyPhen2, and Muta-tionTaster.<sup>[11](#page-8-2)</sup> We evaluated the pathogenicity of the candidate variants based on the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics guideline.<sup>[19](#page-8-4)</sup> Sanger sequencing was further performed to validate the candidate variants, and segregation analyses were performed in family members.

## Complementary DNA Analysis

To determine the effect of the noncanonical splice variant on transcripts, reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction was employed, using RNA from nasal epithelial cells. Total RNA from nasal cell suspensions was isolated using RNeasy Mini Kit (Qiagen, Germany). Conversion of RNA to complementary DNA (cDNA) was performed with the first-strand cDNA synthesis kit (Takara, Dalian, China), according to manufacturer's instructions. cDNA was amplified by polymerase chain reaction with specific primers, and the product was subjected to 2% agarose gel electrophoresis and sequence analyses. The primers used in polymerase chain reaction reactions are listed in [Table I](#page-9-0) (available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com).

#### Statistical Analyses

Statistical analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel (Microsoft, Redmond, Washington) and SPSS v 22 (IBM Corporation, Armonk, New York). The differences between rates were tested by  $\chi^2$  $\chi^2$  or Fisher exact tests. Group comparisons were performed using the Student  $t$  testing. Statistical tests were 2-sided and statistical significance was accepted at  $P < .05$ 

#### Ethical Considerations

The study protocol was approved by the Ethics Committees of Children's Hospital of Fudan University.

#### **Results**

A total of 72 children, suspected of PCD, were invited to participate, and of these, 18 children no longer fulfilled inclusion criteria, and 4 were "inconclusive" after assessments by a state-of-the-art battery of diagnostic tests. Finally, 50 patients with PCD from 47 families were confirmed with a positive diagnosis of PCD and enrolled ([Figure 1](#page-9-1); available at [www.](http://www.jpeds.com) [jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com). The frequency of clinical characterizations is summarized in [Table II](#page-2-0). Among them, 27 (54.0%) were male, and consanguineous marriage was found for 2 patients. The mean age at enrollment was 8.9 years (range 0.3-18.0); mean age at diagnosis was 8.1 years (range 0- 18.0); 15 (30.0%) patients had situs solitus (SS), 32 (64.0%) had situs inversus totalis (SIT), and 3 (6.0%) had heterotaxy (HTX). Nasosinusitis was detected in 100.0% of patients who underwent sinus computed tomography (CT) (42/42). Other common clinical features include chronic otitis media (96.8%, 30/31), chronic wet cough (85.4%, 41/48), and laterality defects (70.0%, 35/50). Twenty-four children (55.8%) had a specific history of an unexpected neonatal respiratory syndrome.

Respiratory cultures were obtained from 32 of these patients. The samples were expectorated sputum in 72% and pharyngeal swabs in 28%. The median number of bacterial culture for each patient was 4 (range 1-13). The most common bacterial isolates were Haemophilus influenza (18.8%, 6/32), Pseudomonas aeruginosa (12.5%, 4/32), and Moraxella catarrhalis (9.4%, 3/32); Staphylococcus aureus (6.3%, 2/32), Acinetobacter baumannii (3.1%, 1/32), and Legionella pneumophila (3.1%, 1/32) were relatively less common.

Twenty-four children, older than 6 years, underwent pulmonary function test at diagnosis. Reductions of forced expiratory volume in the first second (FEV<sub>1</sub>) (mean  $\pm$  SD:  $87.2 \pm 9.8\%$  predicted) and forced vital capacity (FVC) (83.2%  $\pm$  17.3% predicted) were observed in these children, and forced expiratory flow at 25% and 75% of the pulmonary volume (FEF<sub>25%–75%</sub>) was also significantly affected  $(49.1\% \pm 20.4\% \text{ predicted}).$ 

High-resolution computed tomography (HRCT) was available in 42 patients (images are available on request), which revealed bronchiectasis in 38.1% of the children, and 7 (16.7%) had no apparent change in HRCT imaging. The mean age (years  $\pm$  SD) for those with bronchiectasis was significantly greater than for those without (13.6  $\pm$  5.6 vs 5.8  $\pm$  5.7, P < .05). The median number of lobes involved was 2.4, and the right middle lobe or left middle lobe was the most common lobe to manifest bronchiectasis (data not shown). Diffuse nodules were frequently observed (52.4%, 22/42).

A high prevalence of congenital abnormalities (30.2%, 13/ 43) in PCD was observed in patients who underwent comprehensive examination for comorbidities. A considerable proportion of cases with PCD had thoracic deformity (11.6%, 5/43) and congenital heart disease (9.3%, 4/43). There were also many other conditions identified in these children with PCD, including scoliosis, anosmia, congenital deafness, dwarfism, and antineutrophil cytoplasmic

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NRDS, neonatal respiratory distress.

Group comparisons were performed using the  $\chi^2$  $\chi^2$  test or Fisher exact tests.

\*Numerator/denominator, positive cases/total number of patients who underwent corresponding inspection.

autoantibody-associated vasculitis. Detailed demographic and clinic manifestations are shown in [Table III](#page-10-0) (available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com).

#### Measurement of nNO

The nNO value in 29 cooperative children ranged from 5.6 to 113.2 nL/minute, with a median of 13.9 nL/minute. Although the nNO value in 10 uncooperative children ranged from 1.4 to 37.8 nL/minute, with a median of 10.5 nL/minute. Of the 39 patients tested, 38 (97.4%) were far below the recommended diagnostic cut-off (77.0 nL/minute for oral exhalation against resistance, 47.4 nL/minute for tidal breathing<sup>[20](#page-8-5)</sup>) ([Table IV](#page-3-0)).

#### Ciliary Structural and Functional Analysis

Out of 46 individuals, 33 (71.7%) had definitely abnormal ciliary ultrastructure, including ODA defects (23.9%, 11/46) ([Figure 2](#page-12-0), A; available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com)), combined ODA and IDA defects (21.7%, 10/46) ([Figure 2](#page-12-0), B; available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com), DA defects combined with microtubular disarrangement (19.6%, 9/46) ([Figure 2](#page-12-0), C; available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com), and central apparatus (CA) defects (2/46, 4.3%) ([Figure 2](#page-12-0), D; available at [www.jpeds.](http://www.jpeds.com) [com\)](http://www.jpeds.com). High-speed video microscopy revealed that among the 44 individuals, 42 (95.5%) had abnormal ciliary beat pattern, including virtually immotile (56.8%, 25/44) (Video 1; available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com), stiff (18.2%, 8/44)

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WES, whole exome sequencing.

(Video 2; available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com)), restricted (15.9%, 7/ 43) (Video 3; available at [www.jpeds.com\)](http://www.jpeds.com), and circular (4.5%, 2/44) (Video 4; available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com)). Ciliary beat frequency was available in 38 children with PCD. Frequencies ranged from 0.0 to 11.76 Hz with a median frequency of 2.89 Hz; 8 patients had ciliary beat frequencies within the normal range of 8.42-11.76 Hz (mean 9.98 Hz); 5 individuals had obviously reduced beat frequency 2.46- 7.80 Hz (mean 5.95 Hz), whereas cilia in the other 25 children were nearly or completely immotile. The summary of diagnostic accuracy of nasal nitric oxide, transmission electron microscopy and high-speed video analysis in children with PCD are shown in [Table V](#page-12-1) (available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com)).

#### Genetic Characteristics and cDNA Analysis

Collectively, 81 biallelic mutations spanning 13 genes were identified from 48 subjects with PCD of 46 families. Among the 81 variants, 29 were missense variants, 24 were frameshift, 18 were nonsense variants, and 10 were splicing variants; 57 of 81 variants (70.4%) were novel; 5 subjects exhibited homozygous mutations and 40 exhibited compound heterozygous mutations ([Table VI](#page-5-0)). Interestingly, in P33, we identified a noncanonical splice variant c.931-8T>C in trans with a frameshift variant c.2447\_2448delCA, p.T816Kfs\*3 in CCDC39. c.931-8T>C was not predicted to have a splicing effect but was demonstrated to induce an aberrant splicing at messenger RNA level ([Figure 3](#page-13-0); available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com)) by sequencing of messenger RNA from the patient's nasal epithelial cells.

#### The Correlation between Clinical Characteristics, Ciliary Phenotypes, and Genetic Spectrum

The clinical and genetic pictures of patients with PCD caused by different ciliary beat pattern are shown ([Table VII](#page-6-0)). Generally speaking, ciliary ultrastructural defects and ciliary beat pattern correlated well with genotypes. It is worth noting that the different ciliary beat patterns were identified within 1 gene ([Table IV](#page-3-0)). Prevalence of clinical manifestations did not differ for SIT/HTX group vs the SS groups. Our data did not show any significant difference in the distribution of ciliary phenotypes and genetic spectrum between the SIT/HTX and the SS groups ([Table II](#page-2-0)).

#### **Discussion**

In the present study, we analyzed a large cohort of children with PCD in China. We robustly and comprehensively examined multiple aspects of PCD characteristics, including clinical manifestations, ciliary phenotype, as well as genetic characterization in these subjects, and gained initial insights into the features of PCD in China.

As expected, the clinical manifestations of patients with PCD in China is similar to that previously described, with high prevalence of nasosinusitis, otitis media, chronic wet cough, and RDS. In the present study, laterality defect was re-

ported in 70.0% of subjects, which is significantly higher than the proportion reported in Europe and America.<sup>[21](#page-8-6),[22](#page-8-7)</sup> The roster of pathogens, isolated from our patients, was similar to that from previous studies,  $2^{3,24}$  $2^{3,24}$  $2^{3,24}$  and included Haemophilus influenza, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Moraxella catarrhalis, and Staphylococcus aureus. It is worth mentioning that compared with the high prevalence of Haemophilus influenza (22%-80%), and Pseudomonas aeruginosa (15%-47%), re-ported previously,<sup>[25-28](#page-8-10)</sup> the incidence is markedly lower in our patients.

A few studies have assessed the onset and progression of lung disease in early childhood PCD; Brown et al, for instance, reported that bronchiectasis could in fact occur in infants.<sup>[29](#page-8-11)</sup> In the present study, HRCT was performed in 11 children <4 years of age and revealed that 53.1% had normal lung structure, while patchy exudation and lobar atelectasis instead of bronchiectasis were identified in the rest. In our study, the percentage of bronchiectasis rose with increasing age. Overall, our results revealed that the lung damage of patients with PCD increased with age, which highlights the importance of early diagnosis and aggressive early management.

A previous cross-sectional study in 158 children with PCD showed that mean  $FEV_1$  was 82.5%, predicted at mean age 8.7 years. $26$  In another multicenter study of 137 children  $(7.8 \pm 4.6 \text{ years old})$  with PCD, percent predicted FEV<sub>1</sub> was 82.7%, and declined significantly over time (mean  $-0.57$  percent predicted per year).<sup>[27](#page-8-13)</sup> In general, there was a significant relationship between age and lung disease pro-gression.<sup>[27](#page-8-13),[30](#page-8-14)</sup> Compared with Caucasian pediatric cohorts, the lung function of our patients is significant higher, as the mean  $FEV<sub>1</sub>$  is 87.2% predicted at an older age of 11 years.

Recently, strong correlations between genotypephenotype relationships have been identified in  $PCD^{5,6,27}$  $PCD^{5,6,27}$  $PCD^{5,6,27}$  $PCD^{5,6,27}$ ; specifically, patients who had biallelic mutations in CCDC39 or CCDC40 had worse lung disease and presented with it earlier. In our study, a considerable proportion of patients carried mutations in CCDC39/CCDC40 (20.8%, 10/ 48). Among them, 3 patients (P2, P18 and P33) presented with mild lung disease by both functional and structural assessment (spirometry and CT scans). Intriguingly, P18, the younger sister of P2, had near normal lung function and structure at age 7 years. These findings highlight the significant heterogeneity of pulmonary involvement, which challenges the recognition of PCD. OFD1 has long been recognized as the gene implicated in the primary ciliopathies, which are characterized with neurologic findings, dysmorphic features, and skeletal symptoms (digital, facial, or dental). Variants affecting the C-terminal part of OFD1 (exons 16-22) were found to be associated with X-linked PCD without co-morbidities, $31$  which is exactly the case for P48 (exons 21) in our study. Further study is needed to better elucidate the heterogeneous phenotype.

Cilia motility not only plays a key role in mucociliary transport but may be responsible for creating a leftward flow pattern at the embryonic node, which is key to a properly arranged, asymmetric cardiovascular system. Thus, there

<span id="page-5-0"></span>



Comp., compound; Het, heterozygous; PMID, PubMed Unique Identifier.

is a considerable proportion of patients with PCD  $(3.6\% -17.1\%)$  also with CHD.<sup>[21](#page-8-6)[,22](#page-8-7)[,32,](#page-8-16)[33](#page-8-17)</sup> Consistent with the literature, 8% of the children with PCD were diagnosed with CHD in our study. Apart from CHD, certain extracardiac anomalies have been observed in our study. These comorbidities, such as anosmia, sensorineural deafness, and skeletal dysplasia were also reported in some case reports. A high (9%) prevalence of pectus excavatum was also identi-fied by Kennedy et al.<sup>[34](#page-8-18)</sup> Intriguingly, these phenotypes are common in primary ciliopathies. By whole exome sequencing, we did not found any other potential genes that might explain these comorbidities. Thus, it remains uncertain whether these are coincidental findings or innate aspects of both PCD and primary ciliopathies. Further research is needed to identify the connection and elucidate the underlying molecular mechanisms of phenotypic overlap. Overall, however, little focus has been devoted to the associated abnormalities in PCD comprehensively.<sup>[21](#page-8-6)</sup> Nonrespiratory conditions may complicate PCD care, contribute to the progression of the disease, and alter the response to treatment. Given the high prevalence of associated abnormalities identified in this study, we recommend that all patients diagnosed with PCD have a comprehensive valuation for extrapulmonary findings.

Our study has identified correlations among ciliary ultrastructural defects, genotypes and ciliary beat pattern, asfollows: (1) Immotile cilia usually showed ODA absence or ODA/IDA absence. Genes encoding proteins of the ODAs, ODA docking

<span id="page-6-0"></span>

RGMC, reduced generation of multiple motile cilia; NA, Not applicable.

\*Numerator/denominator, positive cases/total number of patients who underwent corresponding inspection.

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complex system, or those involved in assembly and transport of the dynein arms (such as DNAAF3, DNAAF1, DNAH5, DNAI1, CCDC114 and CCDC103), were identified in these subgroups. (2) Stiff cilia almost invariably showed IDA/ MTD/CA defects. Among these children, genes associated with the factors of the nexin-dynein regulatory complexes (CCDC39, CCDC40) were identified. (3) Although TEM analysis of restricted cilia showed mostly normal ultrastructure, partial ODA defects and CA defects were occasionally observed. Pathogenic variants of the DNAH5 and DNAH11 genes were identified in this subgroup. (4) Mutations in CCNO resulted in greatly reduced number of cilia.

Although typical ciliary beat patterns can be attributed to genotype, it should be stressed that phenotypic variations can be found even within 1 gene. Among the exceptions, the individual P13, who carried a homozygous stop codon mutation in CCDC39 (NM\_181426: c.526\_527delCT), had completely static cilia. The individual P24, carrying the DNAH5 (NM\_001369: c.13126-2A>G; c.7789A>G) mutations, also exhibited a restricted beat pattern, which was distinct from the virtually immotile or minimal residual ciliary beating, reported in published PCD cases with  $DNAH5$  mutation.<sup>[35](#page-8-19)</sup> These results highlight that the exact nature of the mutation in a given gene may have a distinctive effect on ciliary beating.<sup>[36](#page-8-20)</sup>

To identify the genetic spectrum in Chinese patients with PCD, the related literature on gene variation of PCD were reviewed from Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man, HGMD, and PubMed up to July 2019 by using search terms of "primary ciliary dyskinesia," "gene," and "Chinese"; as a result, only 9 publications were found that reported a total of 19 Chinese cases of PCD, in which pathogenic genes were identified. $7-11$  Collectively, a total of 63 cases (including 44 cases from the present study) of PCD were involved and analyzed. Taken together, the results revealed that DNAH5 (25.4%), DNAH11 (14.3%), CCDC39 (12.7%), and CCDC40 (11.1%) are the genetic basis of the majority of PCD cases, accounting for approximately 63.5% of the total. The genotypic spectrum identified in Chinese patients with PCD is also quite similar to that observed in Caucasians.

Diagnostic investigations of PCD are clearly complex, requiring expensive infrastructure and an experienced team of clinicians and scientists, which have restricted their scope of application. In fact, few studies have comprehensively evaluated the diagnostic accuracy and reliability of these tests. In the present study, we evaluated nNO, HSVA, TEM, and genetic tests in our cohort of children with PCD. As timesaving methods, nNO and HSVA have obviously higher diagnostic sensitivity, compared with TEM among our patients. Thus, the present study provides evidence for introducing nNO and HSVA into clinical practice as part of the diagnostic armamentarium for PCD. Moreover, as this study had a high yield of positive genetic diagnoses, many medical institutions without nNO and HSVA could benefit from genetic testing. Our results also suggest that great caution should be taken in interpreting genetic variants of uncertain significance. Some

variants that disrupt splicing or redirect splicing at nonca-nonical sites may be mistaken for benign variants.<sup>[37](#page-8-21)</sup>

Several limitations of this study deserve comment. First, there was potential for observer bias because the ciliary beating pattern analysis was largely based on a subjective description. Second, as there was significant heterogeneity of lung disease in different age groups, the sample size of our study is not powered to distinguish the clinical features between different beat pattern groups. However, we note that this study represents an initial effort to adequately diagnose and fully characterize these patients in China. Third, as a single-center study, we acknowledge that a selection bias was possible. PCD with laterality defects would more easily draw the doctor's attention and be diagnosed, which could have led to a high proportion of SIT among our patients.

In conclusion, by utilizing state-of-the-art diagnostic techniques, we provide a detailed description of the diversity of clinical manifestations, ciliary phenotypes, and genetic spectrum of a large cohort with PCD from China. Our study shows that a considerable proportion of patients with PCD had associated abnormalities. The genotypic spectrum and the unique genotype/ciliary phenotype correlation in Chinese are generally similar to that observed in Caucasians. We hope that the diversity of phenotypes and genotypes identified by this study will lead to better diagnosis for PCD and recognize the heterogeneous nature of this orphan disease.  $\blacksquare$ 

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## Data Statement

Data sharing statement available at [www.jpeds.com](http://www.jpeds.com).

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<span id="page-9-1"></span>

Figure 1. Flow chart of patient's enrollment and the diagnostic tests performed. *inc\**, inconclusive; *NA*, not available.

<span id="page-10-0"></span>

ORIGINAL ARTICLES ORIGINAL ARTICLES

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#### Table III. Continued



AB, Acinetobacter baumannii; ASD, atrial septal defect; DCRV, double chambered right ventricle; F, female; FEF<sub>25%-75%</sub>, forced expiratory flow at 25% and 75% of the pulmonary volume; HI, Haemophilus influenza; LP, Legione

<span id="page-12-0"></span>

Figure 2. TEM images of PCD defects. A, ODA defect, B, IDA and ODA defect, C, dynein arm defects combined with microtubular disarrangement, and D, CA defect. Scale bar, 0.1 um.

<span id="page-12-1"></span>

CBF, cilia beat frequency; CBP, cilia beat pattern; WES, whole exome sequencing.

<span id="page-13-0"></span>

Figure 3. Schematic representation of *CCDC39* NM\_181426: c.931-8T>C splicing. A, Schematic illustrating the normal splice of the *CCDC39* gene; there are no intron sequences between exons 7 and 8; B, Schematic illustrating the effect of the *CCDC39* mutation on the splice, causing an insertion of 7 bp of intron 7 in the cDNA sequence. The yellow boxes indicate the codon.