

30138 - Biostatistics statement

Continuous variables were tested for normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov; they were expressed as a mean \pm standard deviation and compared using an unpaired t-test; otherwise, variables were expressed with median and interquartile range (IQR) and compared using a Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test. Categorical variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages and were compared between groups by a chi-squared test (χ^2). The relationships between continuous variables were evaluated by Pearson's correlation coefficient. A Cox regression multivariate analysis was also performed to determine the influence of different factors on HRV parameters, including in the multivariable model only variables with a p value ≤ 0.1 at univariate analysis. HRV variables were initially analyzed as continuous variables; subsequently, HRV variables that showed a significant association with other factors at multivariate analysis were dichotomized and analyzed according to the lowest quartile value. Kaplan-Meier estimates of the distribution of times from baseline to death were computed, and Mantel-Cox log-rank analysis was performed to compare the survival curves between the groups. All reported probability values are two-tailed and the significance level was set at 0.05. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 18 software package (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL,USA).