T-Wave and Q-Wave Variances on EKG Waveforms

Examples

One of the best ways to gain skills in recognizing abnormal EKG tracings is to practice interpreting them. This reading will provide you with several examples of T-wave and Q-wave variances to examine and interpret.

Inferior T-wave inversion with Q-waves due to prior inferior MI

This EKG tracing shows no ST segment changes. In some patients, T-wave inversion often can be a normal variant. Remember, technicians can interpret the EKG but not manage the patient exclusively from the EKG.
T-wave inversion in the lateral leads due to acute ischemia

Lateral Q-waves (I, aVL) with ST elevation due to acute MI
Inferior Q-waves (II, III, aVF) with ST elevation due to acute MI

This extensive ST elevation is called the “tombstone sign” as the tracing can resemble a tombstone—and, unfortunately, 50% of all STEMIs are fatal.