Migrating Thrombus Trapped in a Patent Foramen Ovale

Arnheid Kessel-Schaefer, MD; Michael Lefkovits, MD; Michael J. Zellweger, MD; Wolfgang Brett, MD; Florian Rüter, MD; Matthias E. Pfisterer, MD; Peter Buser, MD

A 36-year-old woman with a 3-week history of shortness of breath was admitted to the hospital after having suffered syncope. She also complained of left-sided leg pain. Duplex ultrasound revealed a right-sided proximal deep venous thrombosis and an occluded left popliteal artery. Echocardiography demonstrated a dilated right ventricle and tricuspid regurgitation with an estimated pulmonary systolic pressure of 80 mm Hg. Spiral CT demonstrated multiple central pulmonary emboli; cranial MRI showed multiple small infarcted zones; and transesophageal echocardiography (TEE) revealed a patent foramen ovale. After embolectomy of the left popliteal artery and a 10-day course of anticoagulation, follow-up echocardiography showed a possible thrombus in the right atrium. Therefore, TEE was performed, which revealed a thrombus ~10 cm long caught in the foramen ovale on its way to the left atrium (Figure 1). At emergent cardiac surgery, the thrombus was extracted (Figure 2), the persistent foramen ovale closed, and a vena cava filter inserted.

Figure 1. Multiplane TEE (60°). Thrombus (arrowheads) makes its way through patent foramen ovale. Ao indicates ascending aorta; IAS, interatrial septum; LA, left atrium; and RA, right atrium.

Figure 2. Perioperative view: extracted thrombus.
Migrating Thrombus Trapped in a Patent Foramen Ovale
Arnheid Kessel-Schaefer, Michael Lefkovits, Michael J. Zellweger, Wolfgang Brett, Florian Rüter, Matthias E. Pfisterer and Peter Buser

Circulation. 2001;103:1928
doi: 10.1161/01.CIR.103.14.1928

Circulation is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
Copyright © 2001 American Heart Association, Inc. All rights reserved.
Print ISSN: 0009-7322. Online ISSN: 1524-4539

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/103/14/1928

Permissions: Requests for permissions to reproduce figures, tables, or portions of articles originally published in Circulation can be obtained via RightsLink, a service of the Copyright Clearance Center, not the Editorial Office. Once the online version of the published article for which permission is being requested is located, click Request Permissions in the middle column of the Web page under Services. Further information about this process is available in the Permissions and Rights Question and Answer document.

Reprints: Information about reprints can be found online at:
http://www.lww.com/reprints

Subscriptions: Information about subscribing to Circulation is online at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org//subscriptions/