Case Report

Left Atrial Appendage Aneurysm - Echocardiographic Diagnostic

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The left atrial appendage aneurysm is a rare condition that frequently manifests itself by heart arrhythmias or thromboembolism. We report the case of a patient with left atrial appendage aneurysm, diagnosed by echocardiography and submitted to surgical resection.

Introduction

The aneurysm of left atrial appendage is an extremely rare condition, described for the first time in 1938 by Semans & Taussig, quoted by Victor and Nayak. It occurs frequently associated to alterations in the mitral valve and manifests with heart arrhythmias or thromboembolic phenomenon.

The objective of this work is to present the case report of left atrial appendage aneurysm diagnosed by echocardiography.

Case report

Patient of 28 years, male, began to feel palpitations two years ago, with progressive worsening of the symptoms. Sought medical service, when through electrocardiogram, ectopic atrial rhythm was verified, and, through thorax X-ray, incurvation of the left heart silhouette, was verified. Transthoracic echocardiogram was requested.

Through the transthoracic echocardiography a cystic structure was seen in area adjacent to the left chambers (fig. 1). The ventricular function was preserved and the heart valves presented normal morphology, no reflux detected in the study with Doppler. Transthoracic echocardiogram was requested.

The presence of left atrial appendage aneurysm is usually associated to alterations in the mitral valve or to defects of the pericardium. Isolatedly, it is uncommon.

The echocardiography remains an excellent method in the evaluation of the left atrial appendage aneurysms, especially via transesophagus. Habitually, the transthoracic echocardiogram allows the visualization of cystic structure connected to the left atrium, besides the evaluation of committance of associated mitral valve. The transesophageal echocardiogram allows the visualization of left atrial appendage, due to the proximity of the esophagus to that structure, and the verification for trombus within.

Besides these methods, for diagnostic definition, magnetic nuclear resonance and angiography can be used. For the patient in this case, the echocardiographic diagnosis was sufficient enough for indication of surgery.

Discussion

The presence of left atrial appendage aneurysm is usually associated to alterations in the mitral valve or to defects of the pericardium. Isolatedly, it is uncommon.

The echocardiography remains an excellent method in the evaluation of the left atrial appendage aneurysms, especially via transesophagus. Habitually, the transthoracic echocardiogram allows the visualization of cystic structure connected to the left atrium, besides the evaluation of committance of associated mitral valve. The transesophageal echocardiogram allows the visualization of left atrial appendage, due to the proximity of the esophagus to that structure, and the verification for trombus within.

Besides these methods, for diagnostic definition, magnetic nuclear resonance and angiography can be used. For the patient in this case, the echocardiographic diagnosis was sufficient enough for indication of surgery.

Considering the complications that can arise of this abnormality, especially the heart arrhythmias and the thromboembolic phenomenon, the surgical resection is recommended as soon as the diagnosis is established, with good prognosis for the patient.

Key words

Aneurysm; atria; echocardiography/diagnosis.

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exam in patient with left atrial appendage aneurysm.

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Study association
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Fig. 2 - Transesophageal echocardiography visualizing the left atrial appendage, that is aneurysmal (AAE). AO - aorte.

References