

TESTING FOR RIGHT-TO-LEFT CARDIAC SHUNT: THE COST IS TOO HIGH, THE YIELD TOO LOW

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Patients with cryptogenic stroke have a higher prevalence of patent foramen ovale (PFO) than controls and patients with small vessel disease or macroangiopathy. The stroke recurrence risk is not significantly elevated in patients with isolated PFO but might be higher in patients with both PFO and atrial septal aneurysm. It is enough to treat the risk of recurrent stroke with acetylsalicylic acid. Oral anticoagulation is not superior to aspirin monotherapy. In case of a recurrent stroke under aspirin or oral anticoagulation, percutaneous closure of PFO may be considered. Migraine, in particular migraine with aura is associated with PFO. Despite retrospective studies reporting improvement of migraine after PFO closure, this procedure cannot be recommended for the prevention of migraine. Therefore routine screening for PFO in patients with cryptogenic stroke or migraine with aura is not recommended.

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2. Diener HC, Kurth T, Dodick D. Patent foramen ovale, stroke, and cardiovascular disease in migraine. *Curr Opin Neurol* 2007;20(3):310-319.

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