

NON STENOSING FLOATING THROMBUS IN CAROTID ARTERY – CASE SERIES

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Non stenosing floating thrombus (FT) in carotid artery is a rare condition causing TIA or ischemic stroke (IS). The true incidence, precipitating condition and treatment is unknown.

We found 5 patients with non stenosing FT in carotid artery from about 2500 routine duplex ultrasound examinations performed in acute ischemic stroke/TIA setting in 2,5 years period (incidence about 0.2%). All the patients presented clinically as TIA and in 4 of them minor infarcts were found on brain MRI. The mean age of the patient was 42 years. In all patients no obvious cause of thrombus formation was found by transthoracic and transesophageal echocardiography, holter ECG and hypercoagulable state examinations, and atheromatous plaques were absent as well. Two patients underwent upper respiratory tract infections two weeks before TIA. The patients were treated with therapeutic doses of LMWH and all of FT were dissolved within 7 days, as diagnosed by repeated ultrasound examinations. No complication was observed.

Conclusion: FT can be a direct cause of TIA/minor stroke in young patients, however the precipitating condition of the thrombus formation is difficult to establish. The FT in carotid artery with clinically TIA and minor infarct on brain MRI can be treated successfully by LMWH, however the true value of the treatment must be confirmed in a larger study.