Thoracoscopic left atrial appendage clipping as novel treatment option for peri-device leakage

Athina M. Kougioumtzoglou1, Tim Smith1, Martin J. Swaans2, Lucas V.A. Boersma2, and Bart P. van Putte1,3*

1Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, St. Antonius Hospital, PO Box 2500, 3435 CM Nieuwegein, The Netherlands; 2Department of Cardiology, St. Antonius Hospital, PO Box 2500, 3435 CM Nieuwegein, The Netherlands; and 3Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Academic Medical Center, PO Box 22660, 1100 DD Amsterdam, The Netherlands

* Corresponding author. Tel: +31 088 320 11 80; fax: +31 088 320 11 96. E-mail address: b.van.putte@antoniusziekenhuis.nl

Introduction

Atrial fibrillation (AF) has become the most common cardiac arrhythmia, with a worldwide prevalence of more than 30 million cases.1 Some studies indicate that 20–30% of all ischaemic strokes are diagnosed in patients known with AF. Although oral anticoagulation therapy is recommended for patients with an increased risk for thromboembolic events, some patients at high-risk for bleeding events may benefit more from left atrial appendage (LAA) occlusion for stroke prevention.2,3,4 Trials have shown non-inferiority for percutaneous LAA closure compared with warfarin but also describe a significant amount of peri-device leaks.2,3,5 We describe two patients with peri-device leakage after transcatheter LAA-closure, treated by thoracoscopic clipping of the LAA.

Case report

Case 1

A 69-year-old woman with a medical history of symptomatic antiarrhythmic drug (AAD) refractory paroxysmal AF, stroke (CHA2DS2-VASc score 5), and therapy-resistant epilepsy resulting in frequent collapses with potential risk for head trauma and cerebral bleeding (HAS-BLED score 3), underwent catheter ablation and transcatheter LAA-occlusion (WATCHMANTM 24 mm device, Boston Scientific, Natick, MA, USA). Computed tomography (CT) scan revealed significant peri-device leakage (4–5 mm). Due to the absolute contra-indication for oral anticoagulation therapy, the patient was referred for thoracoscopic LAA-clipping (Atriclip PRO 145, AtriCure Inc., Dayton, OH, USA). Additionally, a totally thoracoscopic MAZE procedure (TT-MAZE) was performed, because of recurrent AAD-refractory AF. The procedure and post-operative course were uneventful. Perioperative Transesophageal echocardiography (TEE) showed complete closure of the LAA, which was confirmed on CT-scan performed 2 months after surgery. Post-operatively the patient was free from AF symptoms.

Case 2

A 77-year-old male with a medical history of permanent AF (CHA2DS2-VASc score 4), prostate carcinoma, Alzheimer’s disease, and gastrointestinal bleedings under coumadines (HAS-BLED score 3), underwent a WATCHMANTM LAA-occlusion (24 mm). Computed tomography scan revealed significant peri-device leakage (9 mm). The patient was referred for thoracoscopic LAA-clipping (Atriclip PRO 145 device). Additionally, a TT-MAZE was performed for his symptomatic AAD-refractory permanent AF. Post-operative CT scan showed complete closure of the LAA as shown in Figure 1. The patient was free from AF symptoms and 48-h Holter showed sinus rhythm, 9 months after surgery.

Conclusion

Thoracoscopic LAA-clipping seems to be a novel and feasible treatment option for peri-device leakage after incomplete transcatheter LAA-closure.

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