



Extreme Cachexia: When Heart Failure Breaks Down Atrial Cardiac Muscle Proteins

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Clinical Image

68-year-old woman submitted to mitral valve replacement and tricuspid annuloplasty 13 years ago, required hospital admission due to severe heart failure symptoms. Fourteen months before she had been diagnosed of severe aortic stenosis and tricuspid regurgitation with normal ventricular function, but patient refused redo-surgery. At admission, 2.9 gr/dl serum albumin and a lymphocyte count of 590/ μ l was detected, revealing a moderate-severe protein-energy under nutrition. Physical examination confirmed it, showed a 17 BMI (Figure 1A), a weight loose of 23.22%, and revealed a precordial systolic murmur and right heart failure signs.

Mechanical aortic and tricuspid prosthetic valve replacement was performed. Right Atriotomy showed a thin, almost transparent, interatrial septum through which mitral prosthesis was seen (Figure 1B-asterisk). Cardiac Cachexia reduced skeletal, respiratory and left ventricle muscle mass. Interatrial isolated septum atrophy is a rare finding. In this case, we think left ventricle mass was preserved due to previous hypertrophy favored by chronic aortic stenosis.

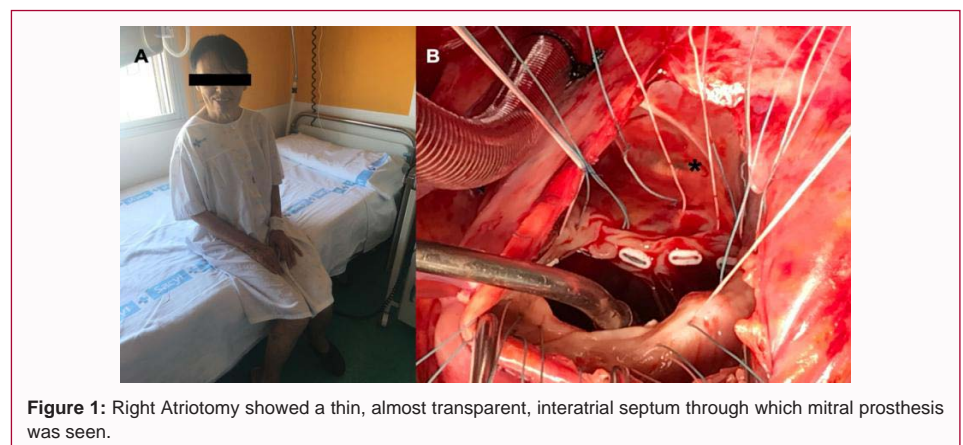


Figure 1: Right Atriotomy showed a thin, almost transparent, interatrial septum through which mitral prosthesis was seen.

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