An unexpected cause of postoperative right heart failure

Udo Abah*, Vipin Mehta and Rana Sayeed

Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, UK

* Corresponding author. Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington, Oxford OX3 9DU, UK. Tel: +44-1865-572626; fax: +44-1865-572822; e-mail: udoabah@nhs.net or udoabah@hotmail.co.uk (U. Abah).

Received 17 January 2012; received in revised form 20 June 2012; accepted 25 June 2012

Keywords: Heart valve • Resuscitation • Myocardial injury

Cardiac injury from cardiopulmonary resuscitation is a rare phenomenon. A 72-year-old women following elective mitral valve repair suffered cardiac arrest (pulseless electrical activity). Post-resuscitation transoesophageal echocardiogram (Fig. 1) revealed a rupture of the anterior papillary muscle of the tricuspid valve (Fig. 2). She underwent emergency tricuspid valve replacement with a successful outcome.

Figure 1: Intraoperative transoesophageal echocardiogram demonstrating a flail anterior tricuspid leaflet.

Figure 2: An anterior tricuspid leaflet with the avulsed papillary muscle seen through a longitudinal right atriotomy.