Freely floating thrombus in the left atrium

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An 88-year-old male with chronic renal failure (creatinine 2.5 mg/dl) was admitted to the hospital with dyspnoea. Transthoracic echocardiography revealed a mass (Fig. 1) rotating in the left atrium (Supplementary Video 1) towards the mitral annulus (Supplementary Video 2), leading to mitral stenosis. The mass was successfully removed.

Supplementary material (Videos 1 and 2) is available at EJCTS online.

Video 1: The mass was solid and without cavitations. It seemed to spin freely within the left atrium with no connections to the atrial wall. In fact, no pedicle was detected.

Video 2: The mass moved towards the mitral annulus into the left ventricle, leading to an obstruction of the blood flow towards the mitral valve. The Doppler derived measurement of mitral valve gradient was about 12 mmHg: however, this value was inaccurate for the atrial fibrillation and the high heart rate. Patient suffered from dyspnea and heart failure probably caused by the obstruction induced by the mass such as in case of mitral stenosis. The risk of embolism was too high and the patient was operated for mass resection on cardiopulmonary bypass without aortic clamping. The histological evaluation revealed the origin of the mass: it was a thrombus!

Figure 1: Transthoracic echocardiography revealed a left atrial mass of about 8 × 6 cm. The patient suffered from atrial fibrillation, but no anticoagulation treatment was used.