Massive mitral valve calcification

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A 78-year old male patient was referred because of progressive dyspnoea. A diastolic murmur was detected and echocardiography showed two intracardiac masses (Fig. 1A). A computed tomography scan confirmed massive calcification of the entire mitral valve (Fig. 1B and D). Associated with valve degenerative processes, mitral valve calcification implies challenging valve replacement procedures and recurrent prosthesis desinsertion.

Figure 1: (A) Echocardiographic image showing two intracardiac masses initially misdiagnosed as tumours, but then found to be consistent with calcification of the mitral valve. (B) Sagittal CT scan view reveals an intracardiac hyper-dense material identified as massive calcification of the mitral valve. (C) Unenhanced CT shows calcium between the left atrium and the left ventricle corresponding to a complete mitral valve calcification (arrow). (D) A sagittal CT scan view showing a donut-shaped mitral valve, with calcification involving the entire valve and subvalvular apparatus. Because of the absence of severe symptoms and massive mitral calcification, surgery was temporarily ruled out in this patient. CT: computed tomography.