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IMAGES IN CARDIOLOGY

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Computed tomography to visualise a left coronary artery main stem stent

A 78-year-old woman presented with worsening angina in 2004. She had a long personal cardiac history, having originally undergone coronary artery bypass surgery in 1986 (left internal mammary artery grafted to the left anterior descending artery and vein graft to the first obtuse marginal branch of the circumflex artery).

In 2000 the patient developed an acute coronary syndrome. Percutaneous angiography showed stenosis of the left coronary artery main stem (LMS). She underwent percutaneous coronary intervention to this lesion during which a bare metal stent was deployed with good result.

In order to investigate the patient's current symptoms, percutaneous angiography was performed, during which it was not possible to selectively engage the LMS because the stent was projecting into the lumen of the aorta. We therefore carried out a computed tomographic (CT) scan to assess stent patency.

Images were obtained using a 16-slice scanner (Toshiba Aquilion CFX). The reconstructed picture obtained is shown in the panel. The LMS stent can be seen with no evidence of restenosis. The remainder of the scan showed that both grafts were patent.

Sixteen-slice CT scanning is a good method for assessing stent patency in the LMS, and is particularly useful if stent insertion has resulted in unfavourable conditions for percutaneous angiography.

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