

### Síndrome aórtico agudo (Acute aortic syndrome)

Edited by I. Vilacosta y J.A. San Román. Barcelona: Prous Science, 2002; 330 pgs., 334 figs and 24 tables. ISBN: 84-8124-198-9.

Until relatively few years ago, aortic dissection and rupture were the only entities considered by cardiologists in acute aortic pathology. The important development of imaging techniques has allowed identification of other lesions, such as aortic intramural hematoma and penetrating atherosclerotic ulcer, which have a clinical presentation that is indistinguishable from aortic dissection, but with a different course and prognosis. Acute aortic syndrome includes these 3 entities, which have as a common link an acute shortening of the aortic wall that leads to hemorrhage and the loss of its normal structure, carrying with it a high risk of complications and death.

This book is a re-edition of the book *Dissección aórtica* (Aortic Dissection) published by the same authors in 1997, with the incorporation of new and interesting chapters. One of the most revealing aspects of the first edition, which that has been kept in the present edition, is an excellent and abundant iconography of images of the different diagnostic techniques, such as echocardiography, computerized tomography, magnetic resonance, and angiography. From my point of view, this work is unique in character as it makes an excellent comparison of the morphological findings of pathological anatomy with the various imaging techniques. The chapters in which the role of different imaging techniques is compared with the diagnosis of acute aortic syndrome are especially interesting.

The authors have different personal experiences with the diagnosis and treatment of intramural hematomas and penetrating aortic ulcers. Although advances in knowledge regarding the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of aortic intra-

mural hematoma have been significant over the past years, there are new major gaps in information concerning penetrating aortic ulcers. The relative infrequency of this entity, the probable different courses of symptomatic ulcers as compared to non-symptomatic ulcers, and the lack of long-term studies call for caution in the diagnosis and treatment of this disease.

The book dedicates 2 chapters to traumatic aortic pathology, as this shares some diagnostic and therapeutic aspects of the acute aortic syndrome but with different action algorithms. Of special interest are the 5 chapters dedicated to the surgical and endovascular treatment of the acute aortic syndrome. Recently, endovascular treatment has been shown to be useful in complications from disease of the descending aorta and aortic arch. Although these themes will continue to be expanded upon in the future, the present edition of the book rigorously deals with the evidence and applications of this new therapeutic modality.

The majority of the chapters have been written by experts in aortic pathology, and very prestigious international authors have been added to those of the Hospital de San Carlos of Madrid and the Hospital Universitario de Valladolid.

In summary, this second edition of the book on aortic pathology by Isidre Vilacosta and José Alberto San Román is as excellent as the first edition with an exceptional iconography and a high content level based on the authors' own experience and an exhaustive review of the medical literature. Although my particular enjoyment of the book is biased due to my being a fan of aortic pathology, the book seems to be to be highly commendable for all physicians who wish to update their knowledge on an ever-changing and increasingly more important subject in every day cardiology practice.

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