Perinatal Stroke With No Obvious Cause

To the Editor:

In the population-based study from Estonia on the epidemiological characteristics of perinatal stroke,1 the authors analyzed the clinical data of 38 affected patients. Previously identified risk factors for perinatal stroke occurred only in 32% of cases. Neonatal pneumothorax not included into the list of risk factors might result in this serious cerebral event.

We were the first who demonstrated the origin of cerebral arterial air embolization in neonates with pneumothorax.2,3 In the cited article1 58% of the affected newborns had respiratory problems, and 5 were intubated and needed artificial ventilation. Pneumothorax is the most common complication occurring in 30% to 50% of those infants who require mechanical ventilation.4

Moreover, neonatal pneumothorax remains frequently silent, clinically. Because only macroscopic bubbles are identifiable by cranial radiology5 performed in the affected neonates, we may suppose that some of them might have cerebral arterial air embolization leading to stroke, originating from their respiratory complications.

Disclosures

None.

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Stroke. 2008;39:e35; originally published online December 27, 2007;
doi: 10.1161/STROKEAHA.107.506907
Stroke is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
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Print ISSN: 0039-2499. Online ISSN: 1524-4628

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the
World Wide Web at:
http://stroke.ahajournals.org/content/39/2/e35

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