

World Journal of *Clinical Cases*

World J Clin Cases 2023 March 6; 11(7): 1434-1668



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ABOUT COVER

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The WJCC is now abstracted and indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE, also known as SciSearch®), Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition, Current Contents®/Clinical Medicine, PubMed, PubMed Central, Scopus, Reference Citation Analysis, China National Knowledge Infrastructure, China Science and Technology Journal Database, and Superstar Journals Database. The 2022 Edition of Journal Citation Reports® cites the 2021 impact factor (IF) for WJCC as 1.534; IF without journal self cites: 1.491; 5-year IF: 1.599; Journal Citation Indicator: 0.28; Ranking: 135 among 172 journals in medicine, general and internal; and Quartile category: Q4. The WJCC's CiteScore for 2021 is 1.2 and Scopus CiteScore rank 2021: General Medicine is 443/826.

RESPONSIBLE EDITORS FOR THIS ISSUE

Production Editor: Si Zhao; Production Department Director: Xiang Li; Editorial Office Director: Jin-Lei Wang.

NAME OF JOURNAL

World Journal of Clinical Cases

ISSN

ISSN 2307-8960 (online)

LAUNCH DATE

April 16, 2013

FREQUENCY

Thrice Monthly

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Bao-Gan Peng, Jerzy Tadeusz Chudek, George Kontogeorgos, Maurizio Serati, Ja Hyeon Ku

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

<https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/editorialboard.htm>

PUBLICATION DATE

March 6, 2023

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<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/288>

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ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGE

<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/242>

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/239>

ONLINE SUBMISSION

<https://www.f6publishing.com>



Commentary on a case report and literature review of acute carotid stent thrombosis

Matthew Willman, Brandon Lucke-Wold

Specialty type: Medicine, research and experimental

Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited article; Externally peer reviewed.

Peer-review model: Single blind

Peer-review report's scientific quality classification

Grade A (Excellent): 0
Grade B (Very good): B, B, B, B
Grade C (Good): 0
Grade D (Fair): 0
Grade E (Poor): 0

P-Reviewer: Arunachalam J, India; Ding X, China; Sef D, United Kingdom

Received: November 4, 2022

Peer-review started: November 4, 2022

First decision: December 26, 2022

Revised: January 4, 2023

Accepted: February 15, 2023

Article in press: February 15, 2023

Published online: March 6, 2023



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Abstract

In this commentary on the article entitled “Acute carotid stent thrombosis: A case report and literature review”, the key points of the article are discussed. Acute carotid stent thrombosis (ACST) in the setting of carotid artery stenting (CAS) represents a rare but potentially catastrophic event. There is a wide range of treatment options available, including carotid endarterectomy, which is generally recommended for cases of refractory ACST. While there is no standard treatment regimen, dual antiplatelet therapy is typically recommended both before and after CAS to reduce risk of ACST.

Key Words: Acute carotid stent thrombosis; Carotid artery stenting; Carotid endarterectomy

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Core Tip: This commentary evaluates the article entitled “Acute carotid stent thrombosis: A case report and literature review”, discussing acute carotid stent thrombosis and the current treatment options available. Specifically, carotid endarterectomy is evaluated as a treatment option for refractory stent thrombosis. Additionally, dual antiplatelet therapy, stent material, and stent architectural design are addressed in the commentary.

Citation: Willman M, Lucke-Wold B. Commentary on a case report and literature review of acute carotid stent thrombosis. *World J Clin Cases* 2023; 11(7): 1666-1668

URL: <https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/full/v11/i7/1666.htm>

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.12998/wjcc.v11.i7.1666>

TO THE EDITOR

Acute carotid stent thrombosis (ACST) is a rare (0.5%-5%) complication associated with significant risk in carotid artery stenting (CAS) as the study described[1-3]. Treatment options include thrombolysis, facilitated thrombolysis, percutaneous mechanical thrombectomy, thromboaspiration, and carotid endarterectomy (CEA), the procedure that was demonstrated in the case report of this paper.

Article findings and discussion

Zhang *et al*[3] outlined several risk factors that may be associated with ACST formation, including inadequate antiplatelet therapy and faulty positioning of the stent. In the subacute setting of carotid stent thrombosis, faulty positioning of the stent plays a more significant role in neointimal hyperplasia *via* vascular injury, which may ultimately cause restenosis after CAS[4].

The approach to ACST treatment is influenced by numerous factors. These factors include the presence of neurological injury, the timing ACST occurrence during stent placement or after the procedure, and the overall resources available to the treatment team. CEA is generally recommended in cases of refractory ACST and neurological deterioration[5]. While it has debatable benefit as a single criterion, carotid artery stump pressure measurement has been used to monitor cerebellar perfusion and potentially indicate the need for shunting during CEA[6]. In situations of asymptomatic ACST, the overall recommendation is to pursue conservative management without surgical intervention like CEA [5]. While there is limited data on the efficacy of dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT) and no standard treatment dosing regimens are recommended, aspirin (75-325 mg) and clopidogrel (75 mg) DAPT daily are generally advised both before and after CAS for a minimum of four weeks post-procedure[7,8]. After discontinuation of DAPT, a daily aspirin lifelong regimen is advised. While there is increasing interest in the development of numerous stent materials, bare-metal carotid stents are currently the most commonly used[9].

The direction of future research and conclusion

At this time, there is limited data evaluating the use of drug-eluting carotid artery stents[9]. When comparing the open-cell to closed-cell architecture carotid stents, there is indication of lower rates of occlusions occurring in open-cell architecture carotid stents[10]. Research into the use of drug-eluting stents and stent architecture may offer therapeutic advantage for future treatment. Zhang *et al*[3] highlight the importance of predicting the potential risk of delayed treatment and the associated risk of ischemic brain injury. In the setting of an ACST, the balance between the benefit of CEA stroke reduction and the risks associated with surgical complications are difficult to predict in each patient situation. As Zhang *et al*[3] stated, the data is limited on the topic of ACST and further research into CEA as an intervention for ACST could prove beneficial.

FOOTNOTES

Author contributions: Willman M and Lucke-Wold B contributed to the conception and critical revision of the article; Willman M drafted the article.

Conflict-of-interest statement: All the authors report no relevant conflicts of interest for this article.

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S-Editor: Wang JJ

L-Editor: A

P-Editor: Wang JJ

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