

Acute cardiopulmonary failure after a CT scan

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A 69-year-old male patient presented with retrosternal pain, acute dyspnea, tachypnea, cyanosis, tachycardia, hypotension and acute hypoxemic respiratory failure during a chest and abdomen CT scan. The chest X-ray was indicative of pulmonary edema (Figure 1). The initial differential diagnosis included the presence of allergic shock or acute pulmonary edema. In a more thorough evaluation of the chest CT scan (Figure 2) the attending physicians observed the presence of air in the azygos vein (Figure 2). A plausible diagnosis of air embolism during the process of the CT scan was made and the patient was set in a left lateral decubitus position and was treated with high concentration of oxygen and diuretics. The patient's clinical presentation and arterial blood gases presented a prompt improvement, with a subsequent amelioration of the chest CT scan findings (Figure 3).

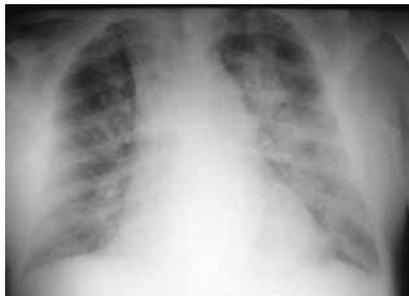


FIGURE 1

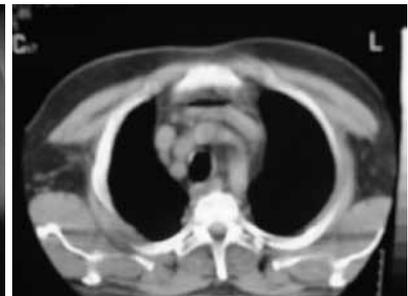


FIGURE 2

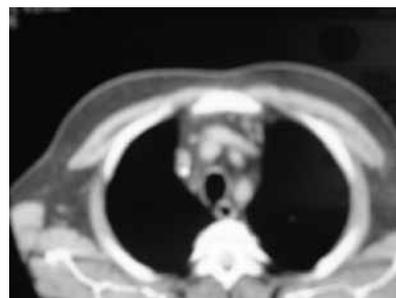


FIGURE 3

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