

Stroke after Cardiac Surgery

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Stroke after cardiac surgical procedures is a serious and costly healthcare problem with often fatal or disabling outcome. Most neurological events occur in a subset of patients who can be defined before operation. Identification of risk factors for perioperative stroke is important for understanding the pathogenesis of this devastating complication as well as for development of new preventive strategies. The frequency of this complication is reported to be as high as 5% in patients undergoing coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, almost 9% in CABG patients over 75 years of age, and nearly 16% in patients undergoing valve surgery or those with preexisting cerebrovascular disease. The causes and mechanisms of CNS injury after cardiac operations are complex and multifactorial and many have been proposed, including perioperative embolism from the heart or aortic arch, systemic hypoperfusion, ischemia from large-vessel occlusive disease, or a combination of these factors. New imaging techniques better define the degree and distribution of ischemic injury and may reveal regions of persistent hypoperfusion. It is essential to develop strategies for avoiding injury to the brain, preventing secondary ischemic damage and promoting recovery of brain tissue.

Biography

Draginja Cvetkovic graduated from the School of Medicine University of Belgrade, Serbia in 1984. She attended Postgraduate Study in Cardiology at the University of Belgrade and was a research associate at the Institute for Medical Research in Belgrade. She had special interest in pharmacological treatment in pulmonary hypertension. Upon coming to the USA, she completed internship and residency in Anesthesia at the Beth Israel Medical Center in New York and was fellowship trained in Cardiac Anesthesia at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York. In practicing cardiac anesthesia, Dr. Draginja Cvetkovic has focused for 15 years on anesthetizing patients with congenital heart disease. Her certifications are The American Board of Anesthesiology, National Board of Echocardiography, and Subspecialty Certification in Pediatric Anesthesiology. She is now practicing at the Westchester Medical Center in Walhalla, New York. Dr. Draginja Cvetkovic is involved in full range of cardiothoracic surgical procedures including CABG, mitral and aortic valve repair, aortic aneurysm surgery, ventricular assist devices and heart transplants.

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