

Hematogenous spread

Bacteria can also use the blood to spread to other parts of the body.

The hematogenous spread of bacteria, fungi and protozoa may also reach the brain vessels, which happens mostly through septic emboli. From such an embolus a metastatic focal encephalitis and later a septic-embolic **brain abscess** may arise. The most frequently underlying infections that may cause septic emboli are bacterial **endocarditis** as well as bacterial infections of artificial heart valve prostheses. Congenital heart malformations with a right-to-left shunt also play here a certain role. Basically, however, all septic conditions and bacteriemias may cause septic-embolic brain abscesses. They occur frequently as multiple lesions. MRI is superior to CT in depicting the different stages of evolution from focal encephalitis, through the hardly encapsulated early abscess, to the formation of a membrane and later a dense fibrous capsule ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Weber W, Henkes H, Felber S, Jänisch W, Voitalla D, Kühne D. [Septic-embolic and septic metastatic brain abscess]. Radiologe. 2000 Nov;40(11):1017-28. Review. German. PubMed PMID: 11147317.

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