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'Bubbles in the Brain': Retrograde Venous Air Embolism in the Cavernous Sinus

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A 27-year-old woman extracted her right subclavian venous catheter, sat up and experienced a convulsive syncope. Cerebral CT 30 min later showed transient air embolism in both cavernous sinuses. Retrograde venous cerebral air embolism is a rare but potentially fatal complication of central venous catheters.

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Fig. 1. **a, b** Cerebral CT revealed bilateral air embolism in the cavernous sinus. **c** Air bubbles were completely reabsorbed 5 h later.