A 42-year-old man presented with acute ataxia resulting from an embolic stroke without classic vascular risk factors but revealing a hitherto clinically asymptomatic aorto-ventricular tunnel, which is defined by a hereditary connection between the ascending aorta and one of the ventricles (figure). We postulate that blood turbulences around the tortuous tunnel with a stenotic component and low flow areas caused cardiogenic cerebral emboli. Although no specific guidelines exist, we consider a surgical treatment approach as applied before by Nezafati and colleagues as reasonable in the presence of ongoing, multifocal ischemic events.

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