Mechanical thrombectomy is an increasingly important therapy for acute stroke that can also benefit the very old – assuming a careful selection of patients and risk assessment. This is a finding of a Portuguese study presented at the 4th Congress of the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) in Lisbon.

For several years now, the endovascular thrombectomy has been a way of removing larger vascular obstructions. In this procedure, the thrombus is extracted from the cerebral vessel via a catheter inserted in the groin. Numerous international studies have shown that endovascular treatment is a substantial improvement over purely drug-based therapy. The procedure is especially effective in dealing with extremely long blood clots and large obstructions of the cerebral arteries and often yields positive results: Thanks to this procedure, more than 60 percent of those treated survive the stroke without any subsequent impairment or with only minor subsequent impairment.

Dr. Ary de Sousa and his colleagues reviewed the treatment success of thrombectomy in more than 200 patients who had suffered an anterior acute ischemic stroke (AIS) and had no or only slight disability prior to this event. The patients were divided into two groups: one with individuals under 80 and one with individuals 80 and older.

One third of the 80 and over patients functionally independent after the procedure