CENTRAL ILLUSTRATION: Evidence-Based Algorithm for PFO Closure in Ischemic Stroke Patients for Highest Clinical Yield, Based on Randomized Trials

Biological age ≤60 years ischemic stroke, and PFO

- Large artery atherosclerosis
- Cardioembolic source
- Small vessel disease
- Arterial dissection
- Hypercoagulable disorder

No

- Uncontrolled hypertension
- Uncontrolled diabetes
- Autoimmune disease
- Drug or alcohol abuse

No

- Atrial fibrillation or flutter (ideally ≥30-day cardiac monitoring)

No

- <1 year of life expectancy
- End-stage heart, liver, lung, or kidney disease
- Cardiac tumor
- Endocarditis or septicemia
- Severe valvular pathology

No

Medical therapy

Percutaneous PFO closure

Enhanced reasons for PFO closure:
- Prior venous thromboembolism
- Multifocal cerebral defects
- Large PFO
- Atrial septal aneurysm
- Eustachian valve or Chiari network