

HEART FAILURE

HEART FAILURE



The Canadian Cardiovascular Society

IS IT

# HEART FAILURE

AND WHAT SHOULD I DO?



**Canadian Cardiovascular Society**

*Leadership. Knowledge. Community.*



## About this Pocket Guide

This pocket guide is a quick-reference tool that features diagnostic and management recommendations based on the CCS Heart Failure Comprehensive Guidelines (2017).

These recommendations are intended to provide a reasonable and practical approach to the care of patients with HF. The intended audience is primary care physicians, specialists, nurses and allied health professionals. Recommendations are subject to change as scientific knowledge and technology advance and practice patterns evolve, and are not intended to be a substitute for clinical judgment. Adherence to these recommendations will not necessarily produce successful outcomes in every case.

Please visit [www.ccs.ca](http://www.ccs.ca) for more information or additional resources.

### **Acknowledgements**

The CCS would like to thank the many Heart Failure Guideline Panel members who have contributed countless hours to guideline development as well as our knowledge translation program. We appreciate their dedication and commitment to the CCS and to this important heart failure management resource. A complete list of guideline authors can be found at [www.ccs.ca](http://www.ccs.ca) and our Heart Failure Program co-chairs are listed below:

### **CCS Heart Failure Guideline Co-Chairs**

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## Suspect Heart Failure

Risk Factors	Symptoms	Signs	Key Electrocardiographic Findings	Chest X-ray (CXR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hypertension</li> <li>Ischemic heart disease (IHD)</li> <li>Valvular heart disease</li> <li>Diabetes mellitus</li> <li>Heavy alcohol or substance use</li> <li>Chemotherapy or radiation therapy</li> <li>Family history of cardiomyopathy</li> <li>Smoking</li> <li>Hyperlipidemia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breathlessness</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Leg swelling</li> <li>Confusion*</li> <li>Orthopnea</li> <li>Paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea</li> </ul> <p><i>*especially in the elderly</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lung crackles</li> <li>Elevated Jugular Venous Pressure (JVP)</li> <li>Positive Abdominal jugular reflux (AJR)</li> <li>Peripheral edema</li> <li>Displaced apex</li> <li>3rd heart sound, 4th heart sound (S<sub>3</sub>, S<sub>4</sub>)</li> <li>Heart murmur</li> <li>Low blood pressure (BP)</li> <li>Heart rate &gt; 100 BPM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q Waves</li> <li>Left Ventricular Hypertrophy (LVH)</li> <li>Left Bundle Branch Block (LBBB)</li> <li>Tachycardia</li> <li>Atrial Fibrillation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cardiomegaly</li> <li>Pulmonary venous redistribution</li> <li>Pulmonary edema</li> <li>Pleural effusion</li> </ul>

## If Heart Failure Diagnosis Remains in Doubt

### B-type Natriuretic Peptide (BNP) or NT-proBNP, if available

- BNP\***
  - < 100 pg/ml - HF unlikely
  - = 100-400 pg/ml - HF possible but other diagnoses need to be considered
  - > 400 pg/ml - HF likely
- NT-proBNP\***
  - < 300 pg/ml - HF unlikely
  - = 300-900 pg/ml - HF possible, but other diagnoses need to be considered (age 50-75)
  - = 300-1800 pg/ml - HF possible, but other diagnoses need to be considered (age > 75)
  - > 900 pg/ml - HF likely (age 50-75)
  - > 1800 pg/ml - HF likely (age > 75)

*\*Values correspond to decompensated heart failure and do not apply for diagnosis of stable heart failure.*

### Echocardiogram (ECHO)

- Decreased left ventricular (LV) ejection fraction
- Increased LV end-systolic and end-diastolic diameter
- LVH
- Wall motion abnormalities and diastolic dysfunction
- Increased RV size and/or RV dysfunction
- Valve dysfunction
- Elevated pulmonary arterial pressures (PAP)

**Echocardiogram, ECG, plus recommended lab testing for all patients (CBC, creatinine, ferritin, TSH, troponin, BNP)**

**MORE COMMON**

HFrEF (and HFmEF)  
LVEF  $\leq$  40%, up to 49%

HFpEF  
LVEF  $\geq$  50%

Congenital  
Heart Disease  
Pericardial Disease

**Common etiologies**

Tachyarrhythmia

Valve disease

Known or risk factors for CAD

LVH

CAD workup\*

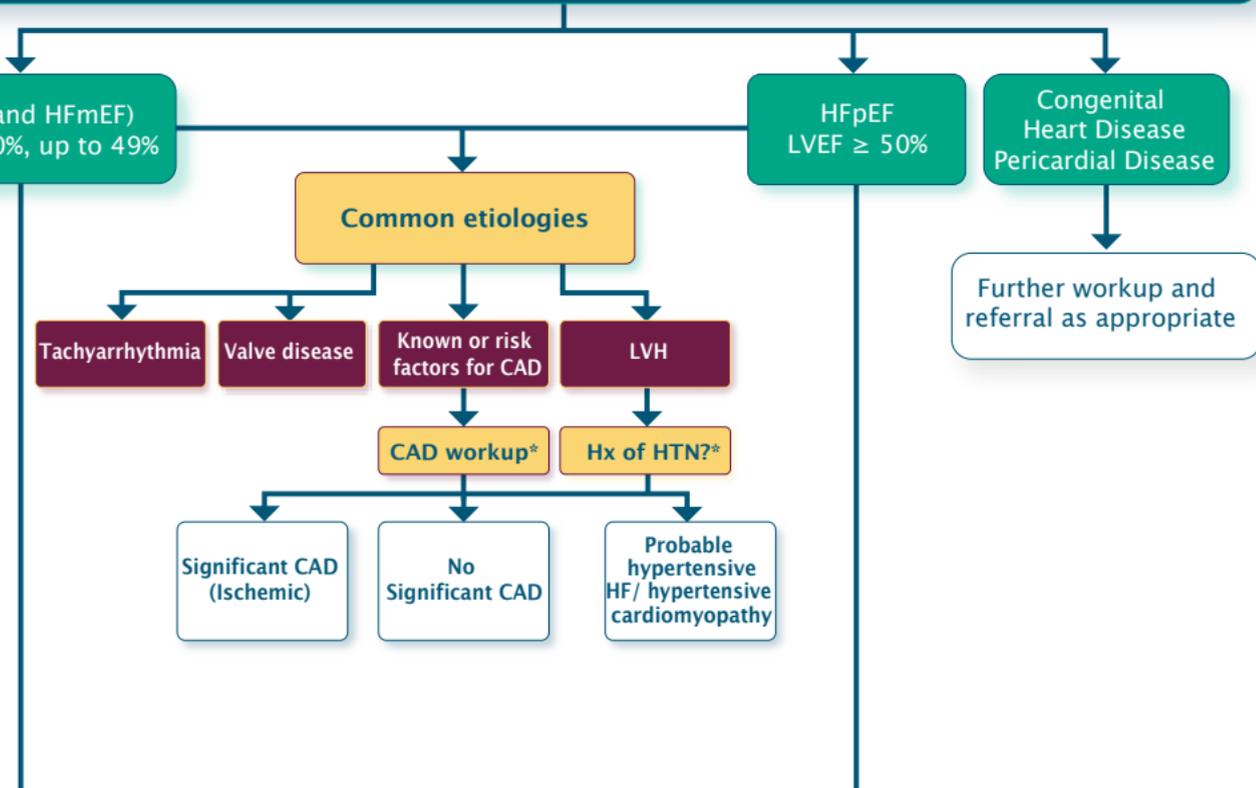
Hx of HTN?\*

Significant CAD (Ischemic)

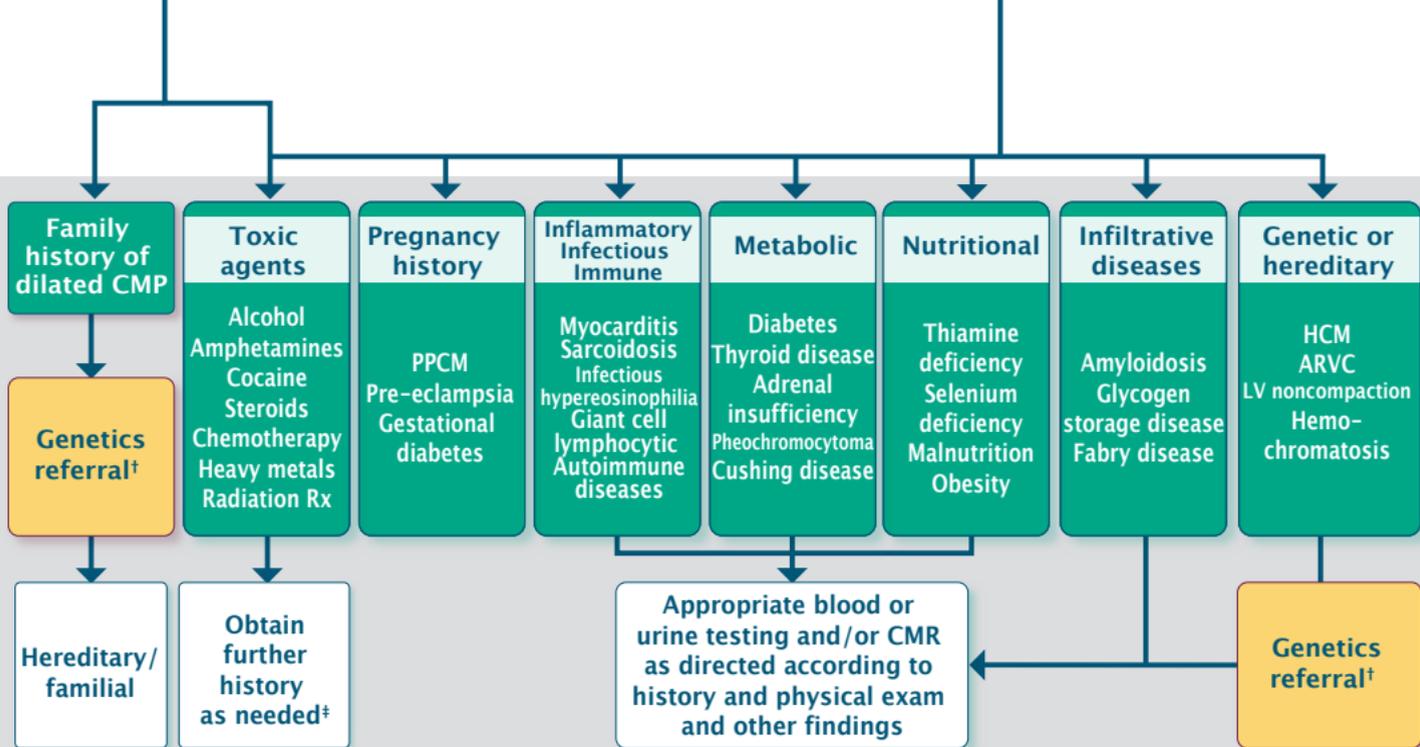
No Significant CAD

Probable hypertensive HF/ hypertensive cardiomyopathy

Further workup and referral as appropriate



LESS COMMON

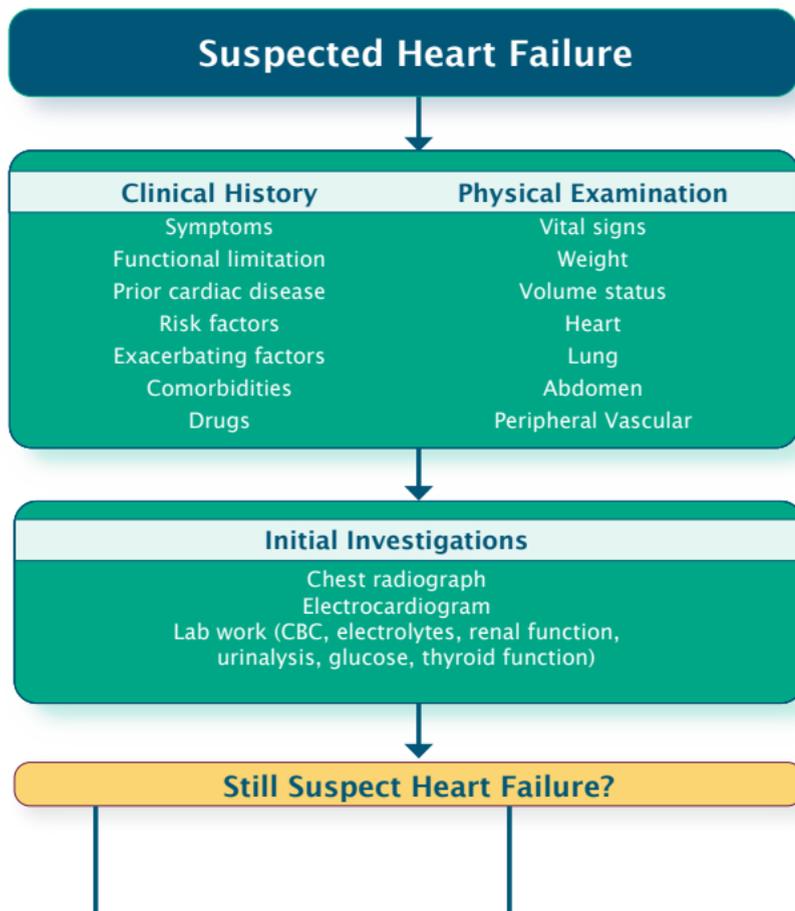


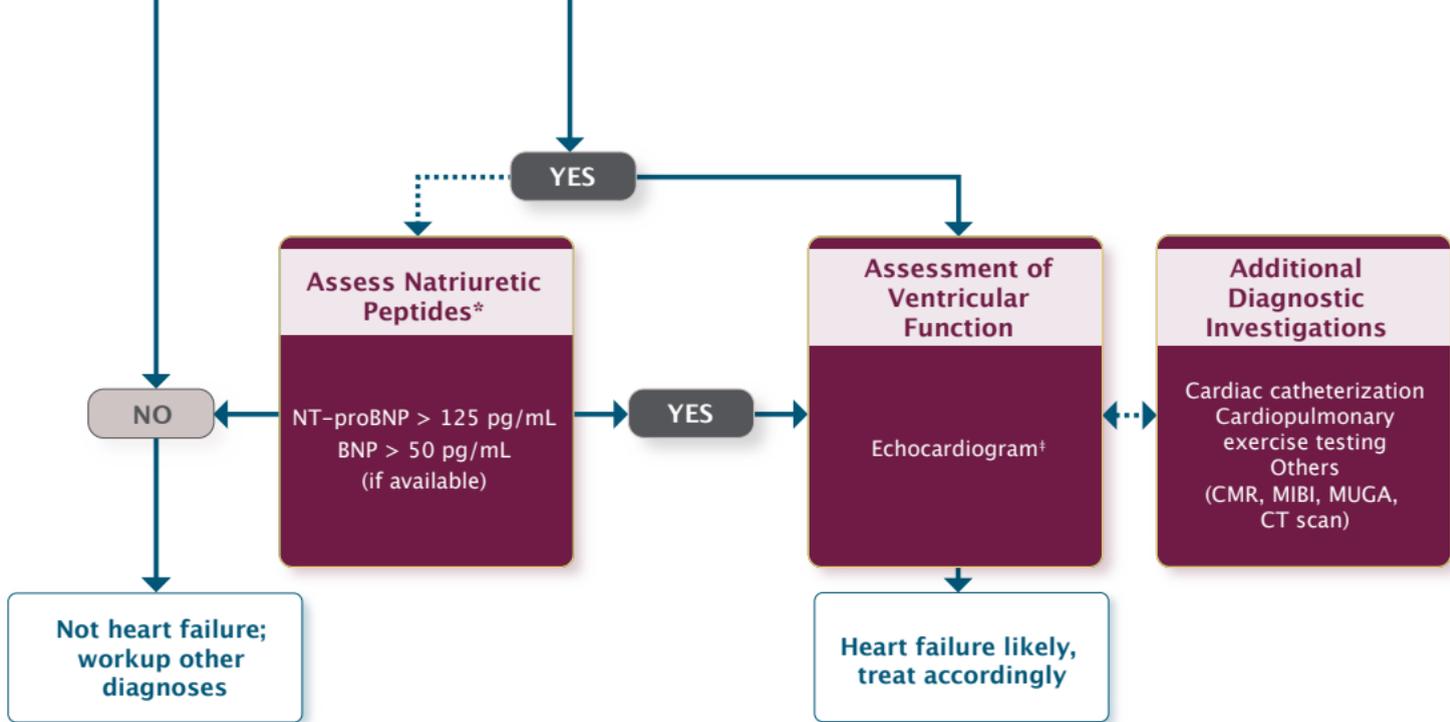
\* Patients may have mixed etiology of HF

† A detailed medical and family history may guide investigations and should be completed in all patients (see recommendation 19)

‡ Direct testing based on pre-test probability, availability and expertise.

ARVC, arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy; CAD, coronary artery disease; CBC, complete blood count; CMP, cardiomyopathy; CMR, cardiac magnetic resonance; ECG, electrocardiogram; HCM, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy; HFmEF, HF with a mid-range ejection fraction; HFpEF, HF with preserved ejection fraction; HFrEF, HF with a reduced ejection fraction; HTN, hypertension; LV, left ventricle; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; LVH, left ventricular hypertrophy; NP, natriuretic peptide; PPCM, peripartum cardiomyopathy; TSH, thyroid stimulating hormone.





\* Natriuretic peptides are not available in all jurisdictions in Canada

‡ Includes both systolic and diastolic parameters (eg, numeric left ventricular ejection fraction, transmitral and pulmonary venous flow patterns, or mitral annulus velocities); a preserved ejection fraction on a routine echocardiogram does not rule out the clinical syndrome of heart failure and therefore clinical judgment is required if other indicators point to heart failure as a diagnosis.

A lower BNP cutoff for suspecting HF in the ambulatory setting facilitates earlier implementation of guideline directed care.

BNP, B-type natriuretic peptide; CBC, complete blood count; CMR, cardiac magnetic resonance; CT, computed tomography; MIBI, myocardial perfusion scan; MUGA, multigated acquisition scan; NT-proBNP, N-terminal propeptide B-type natriuretic peptide.

Warning Signs and Symptoms	Lifestyle and Risk Factor Management	Drug and Device Treatment Regimen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dyspnea                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With less exertion</li> <li>- During sleep</li> <li>- When flat</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Fatigue with less exertion</li> <li>• Increased abdominal swelling or pedal and leg edema</li> <li>• Dyspnea at rest</li> <li>• Weight gain (eg. &gt; 2kg in 2 days)</li> <li>• Lightheaded/faint</li> <li>• Prolonged palpitations</li> <li>• Chest pain that does not go away with rest or with medicine or is worsening</li> <li>• Confusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat cardiovascular risk factors                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Control hypertension</li> <li>- Control Diabetes Mellitus (DM)</li> <li>- Smoking cessation</li> <li>- Obesity counselling</li> <li>- Annual influenza vaccine and periodic pneumococcal pneumonia immunizations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No need to push oral fluids                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sodium restriction between 2g-3g/day is reasonable</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Weigh daily if fluid retention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical therapy that improves survival and reduces hospitalization such as ACEi, ARB, MRA, ARNI, If inhibitors at guideline directed doses should be emphasized as targets</li> <li>• Combination drug regimen is required</li> <li>• Diuretics may need frequent adjustment targeting the lowest effective dose</li> <li>• Most will be used long term and generally life long</li> <li>• Common side effects are manageable by adjusting medication timing and may require periodic laboratory testing</li> <li>• Consider device therapy with reduced EF and/or wide QRS (e.g. ICD, CRT)</li> </ul>

## Evidence-based Drugs and Oral Doses as Shown in Large Clinical Trials

Drug	Start Dose	Target Dose
<b>Ace-Inhibitors (ACEi)</b>		
Enalapril	1.25-2.5 mg BID	10 mg BID/ 20 BID in NYHA class IV
Lisinopril	2.5-5 mg daily	20-35 mg daily
Perindopril	2-4 mg daily	4-8 mg daily
Ramipril	1.25-2.5 mg BID	5 mg BID
Trandolapril	1-2 mg daily	4 mg daily
<b>Angiotensin Receptor Blocker (ARB)</b>		
Candesartan	4-8 mg daily	32 mg daily
Valsartan	40 mg BID	160 mg BID
<b>Beta-blockers</b>		
Carvedilol	3.125 mg BID	25 mg BID/ 50mg BID (> 85kg)
Bisoprolol	1.25 mg daily	10 mg daily
Metoprolol CR/XL*	12.5-25 mg daily	200 mg daily
<b>Mineralocorticoid Receptor Antagonists (MRA)</b>		
Spironolactone	12.5 mg daily	50 mg daily
Eplerenone	25 mg daily	50 mg daily
<b>Angiotensin receptor–neprilysin inhibitor (ARNI)</b>		
Sacubitril/Valsartan	24/26 mg BID	97/103 mg BID
<b>I<sub>1</sub> Inhibitor</b>		
Ivabradine	2.5-5 mg BID	7.5 mg BID
<b>Vasodilators</b>		
Isosorbide dinitrate	20 mg TID	40 mg TID
Hydralazine	37.5 mg TID	75-100 mg TID-QID

\*Limited evidence of short-acting metoprolol tartrate in HF. Metoprolol CR/XL is not available in Canada

## INITIAL REFERRAL

### Situational wait time benchmarks

#### ROUTINE, ELECTIVE REFFERAL

- Chronic HF disease management, NYHA II
- NYHA I – no symptoms

See within 12 weeks,  
ideally within 6

#### SEMIURGENT, INTERMEDIATE RISK

- New diagnosis of HF, stable, compensated
- NYHA II/III
- Worsening HF with therapy
- Mild symptoms with valvular or renal disease or hypotension

See within 6 weeks,  
ideally within 4

#### URGENT

- New diagnosis of HF, not improving with therapy (unstable decompensated)
- Progression to NYHA IV HF
- Posthospitalization or ER visit for HF
- Severe HF with valvular or renal disease or hypotension
- Postmyocardial infarction HF

See within  
2 weeks

#### EMERGENT

- Acute severe myocarditis
- Rapidly progressive heart failure/ cardiogenic shock
- Heart failure with ACS
- Transplant and device evaluation of unstable patient
- New-onset acute pulmonary edema

See within  
24 hours

Initial Referral Urgency

# HEART FAILURE CARE

Follow-up Frequency\*

\* Visit frequency may increase during medication titration

## LOW-RISK INDIVIDUAL

- NYHA I or II
- No hospitalizations in past year
- No recent changes in medications
- Receiving optimal medical/device HF therapies

Follow-up every 6–12 months

## INTERMEDIATE-RISK INDIVIDUAL

- No clear features of high or low risk

Follow-up every 1–6 months

## HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUAL

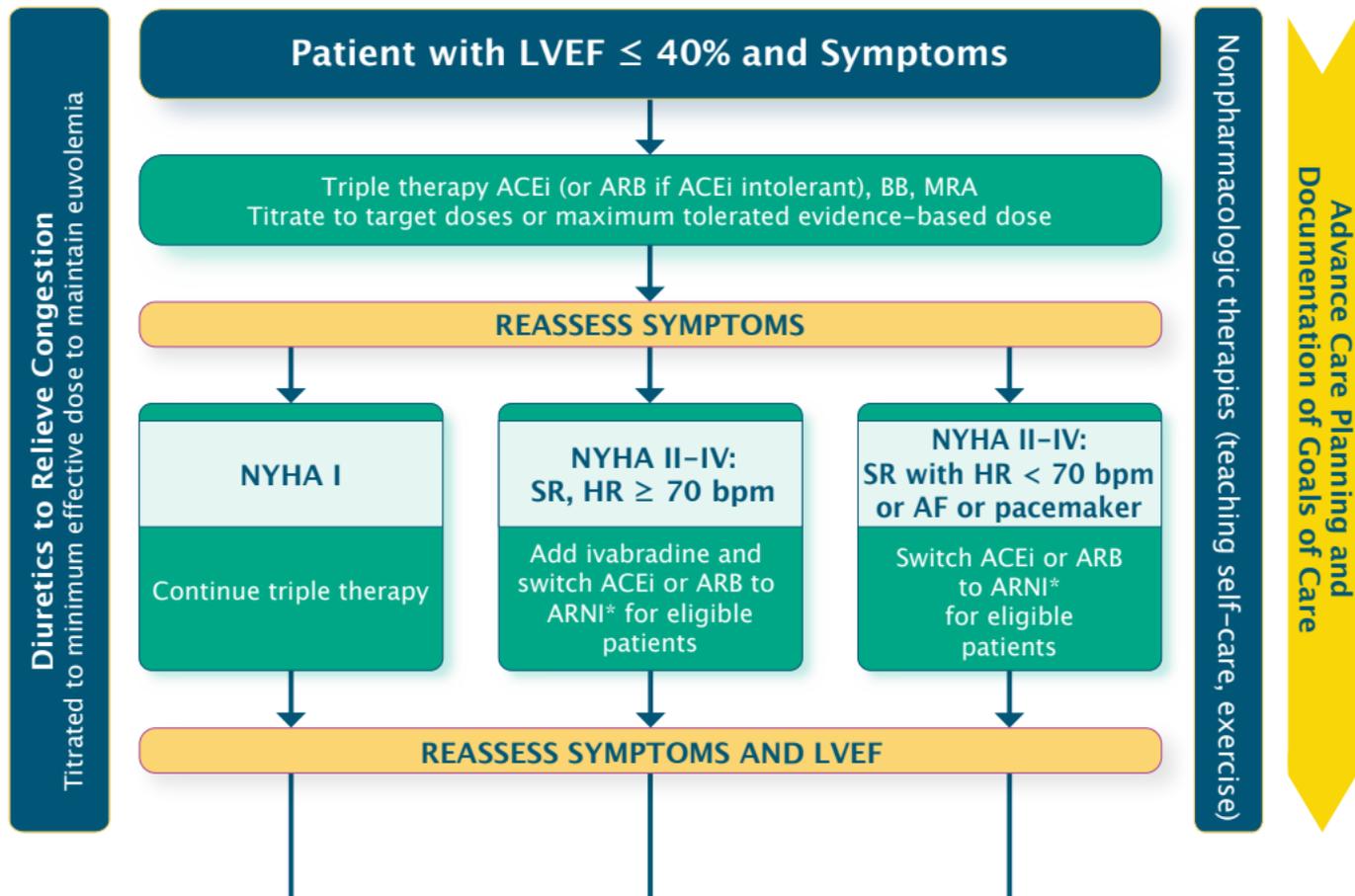
- NYHA IIIB or IV symptoms
- Recent HF hospitalization
- During titration of HF medications
- New onset heart failure
- Complications of HF therapy (rising creatinine, hypotension)
- Need to down-titrate or discontinue  $\beta$ -blockers or ACEi/ARB
- Severe-concomitant and active illness (eg. COPD, frailty)
- Frequent ICD firings (1 month)

Follow-up every 1–4 weeks or as clinically indicated (remote monitoring possible for some titrations)

Make inactive or consider for discharge from HF clinic if a **minimum** of 2 of the following characteristics are present:

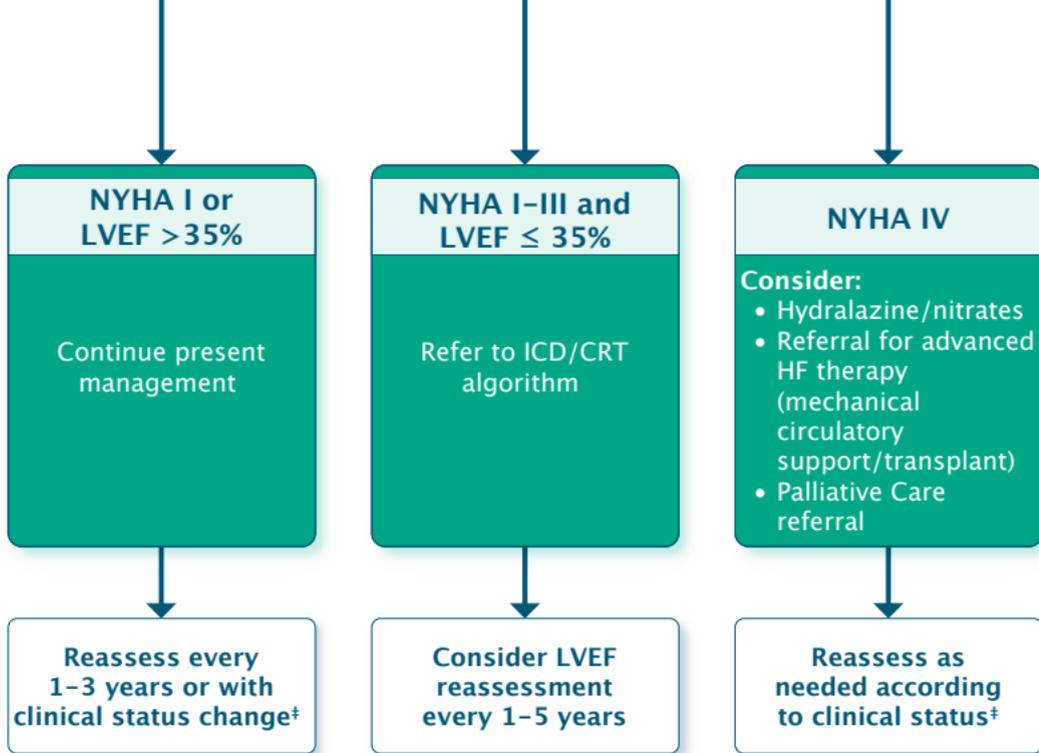
- NYHA I or II for 6–12 months
- Receiving optimal therapies
- Reversible causes of HF fully controlled
- Having access to family physician with expertise in management of HF
- Adherence to optimal HF therapy
- No hospitalization for > 1 year
- LVEF > 35% (consistently on >1 EF measurement)
- Primary care provider has access to urgent specialist reassessment

ACEi/ARB, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor/angiotensin receptor blocker; ACS, acute coronary syndrome; AHA/ACC, American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology; COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; D/C, hospital discharge; ER, Emergency Department; FC, functional class; hrs, hours; ICD, implantable cardioverter defibrillator; MI, myocardial infarction; NYHA, New York Heart Association.



## Diuretics to Relieve Congestion

Titrated to minimum effective dose to maintain euvoolemia



\* ARNI: angiotensin II receptor blocker neprilysin inhibitor (sacubitril/valsartan)

‡ Refer to Table 5 (CCS 2017 Heart Failure Guidelines)

ACEi, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor; AF, atrial fibrillation; ARB, angiotensin receptor blocker; BB, beta blocker; bpm, beats per minute; CRT, cardiac resynchronization therapy; HF, heart failure; ICD, implantable cardioverter defibrillator; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; MRA, mineralocorticoid receptor antagonist; NYHA, New York Heart Association; SR, sinus rhythm.

Non-pharmacologic Therapies (teaching self care, exercise)

Advance Care Planning and  
Documentation of Goals of Care

ACEi	ARB	Initial Dose Sacubitril/Valsartan*	Titration
Higher dose of RAAS inhibitor		100 mg PO BID	Over 3-6 weeks, increase to target 200 mg PO BID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enalapril ≥ 10 mg/d</li> <li>• Lisinopril ≥ 10 mg/d</li> <li>• Perindopril ≥ 4 mg/d</li> <li>• Ramipril ≥ 5 mg/d</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candesartan ≥ 16 mg/d</li> <li>• Irbesartan ≥ 150 mg/d</li> <li>• Losartan ≥ 50 mg/d</li> <li>• Olmesartan ≥ 10 mg/d</li> <li>• Telmisartan ≥ 40 mg/d</li> <li>• Valsartan ≥ 160 mg/d</li> </ul>		
Lower dose of RAAS inhibitor		50 – 100 mg PO BID	Over 6 weeks, increase to target 200 mg PO BID
Higher risk of hypotension (eg. low baseline SBP, poor renal function)		50 – 100 mg PO BID	

\*Health Canada labelled dose of 50 mg BID is 24 mg sacubitril/26 mg valsartan, 100 mg BID is 49 mg sacubitril/51 mg valsartan and 200 mg is 97 mg sacubitril/103 mg valsartan.

## CONVERTING TO ARNI:

- **FROM ACEi:** Stop ACEi, **wait at least 36 h** after last dose ( ↑ risk of angioedema), then start ARNI
- **FROM ARB:** Stop ARB, no washout period necessary, start when next dose would have been due

## Comparison: Ivabradine vs Sacubitril-Valsartan

### Ivabradine – Add-on therapy

- Little evidence for de novo HF
  - Need BB titrated first
- Indicated for those in NSR and HR > 70 bpm
- Limited by bradycardia, fatigue
- Not affected by BP, creatinine
- Other side effects less common
- One titration (5, 7.5 BID) at 2 week interval

### Sacubitril-Valsartan – Replacement for ACEi/ARB

- Little evidence for de novo HF
  - Needs ACEi/ARB first
- Limited by hypotension, creatinine, potassium
- Not affected by HR
- Other side effects not common
- Two titrations (50, 100, 200 BID) for 6-12 weeks

## Recommendations and Practical Tips for Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction (HFpEF)

- Minimum effective diuretic dose to maintain euvolemia
- Identification and treatment of underlying factors such as ischemia and valvular disease
- Treat hypertension according to current hypertension guidelines
- Usually loop diuretics are needed, renal function may be very volume dependant
- In most cases, an indication for ACEi, ARB and/or BB is present
- Patients with atrial fibrillation should be anticoagulated unless there is a contraindication
- Individuals with HFpEF, serum potassium < 5.0 mmol/L and eGFR >30mL/min, an MRA like spironolactone should be considered

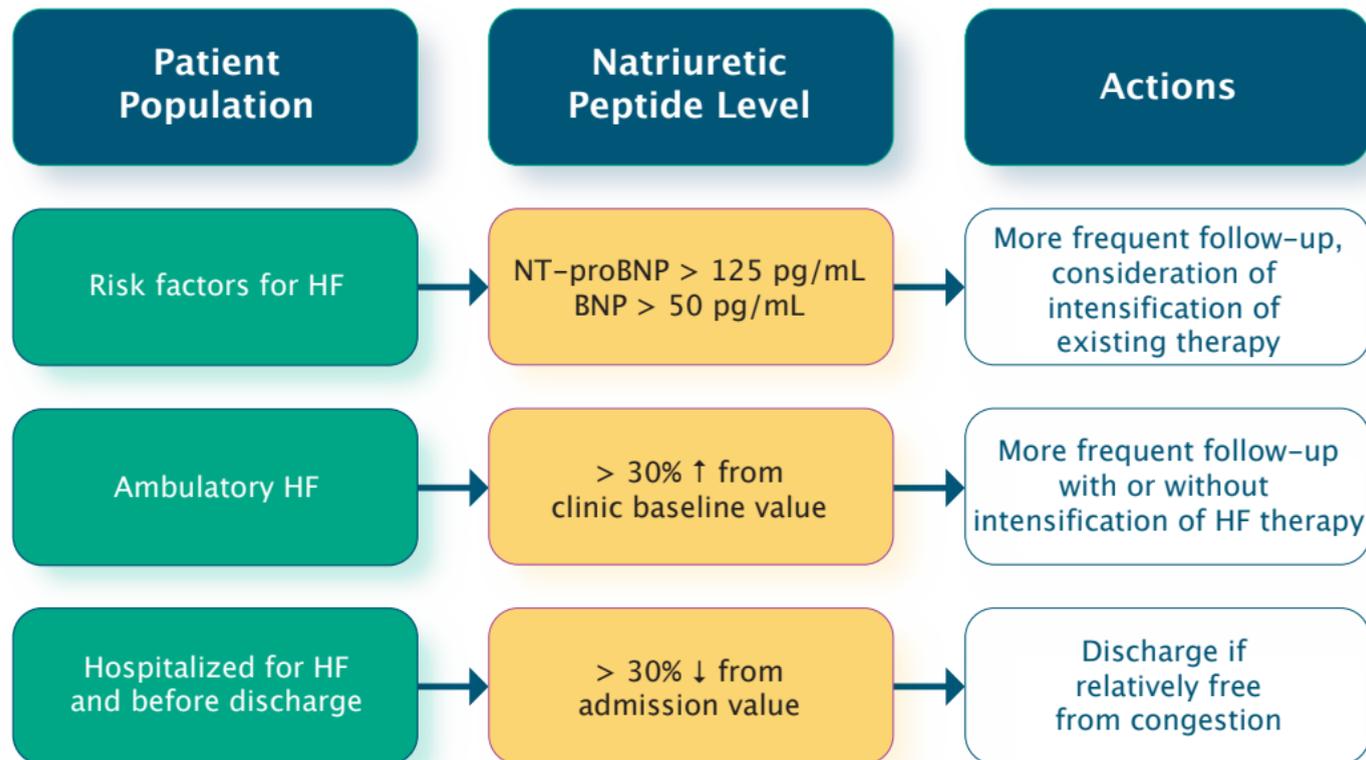
### Shortness of Breath and LVEF > 50%

#### Cardiac causes

- Heart Failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF)
- Other Cardiac Entities
  - Coronary artery disease
  - Valvular heart disease
  - Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy
  - Restrictive cardiomyopathy
  - Constrictive pericarditis
  - Intracardiac shunt

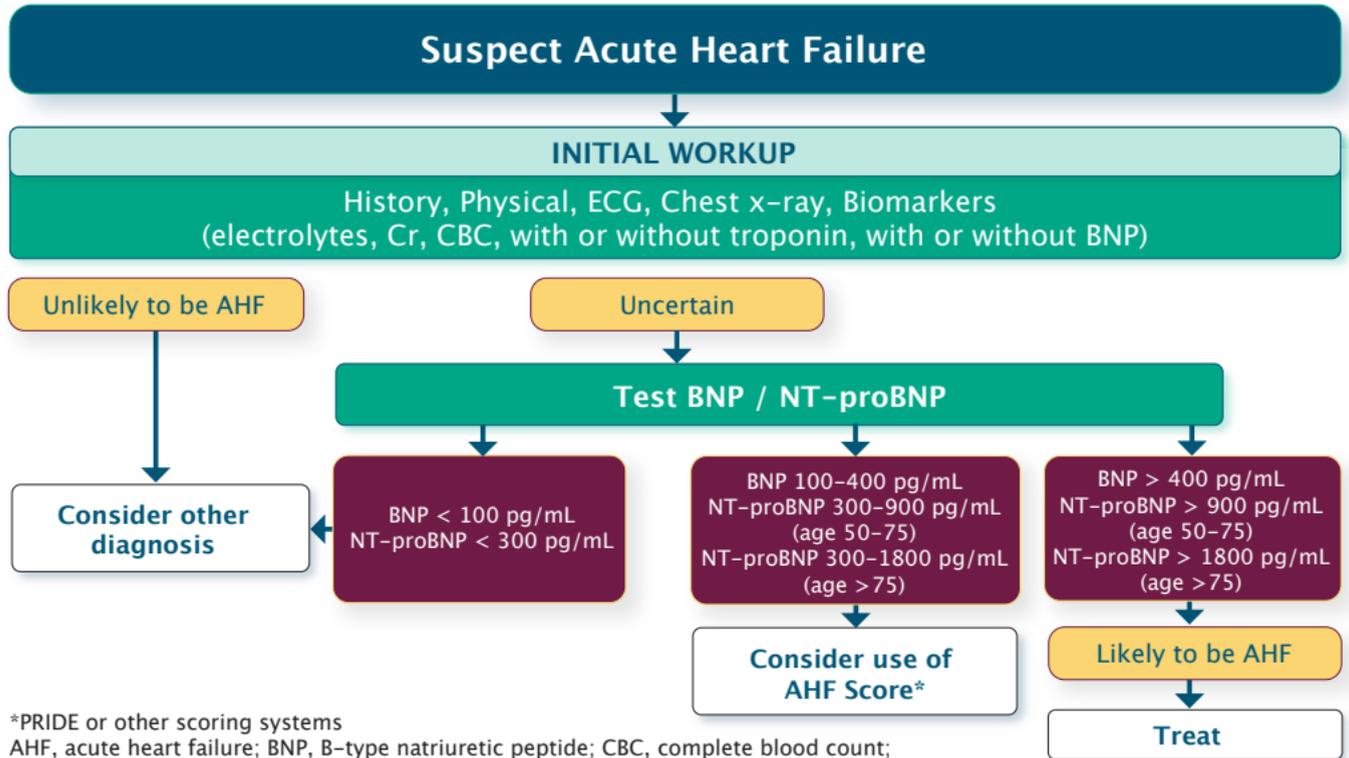
#### Non-cardiac causes

- Lung disease
- Hyperventilation
- Pulmonary arterial hypertension
- Extracardiac shunt
- Obesity
- Anemia
- Thyrotoxicosis
- Deconditioning



BNP, B-type natriuretic peptide; HF, heart failure; NTproBNP, amino-terminal fragment propeptide B-type natriuretic peptide.

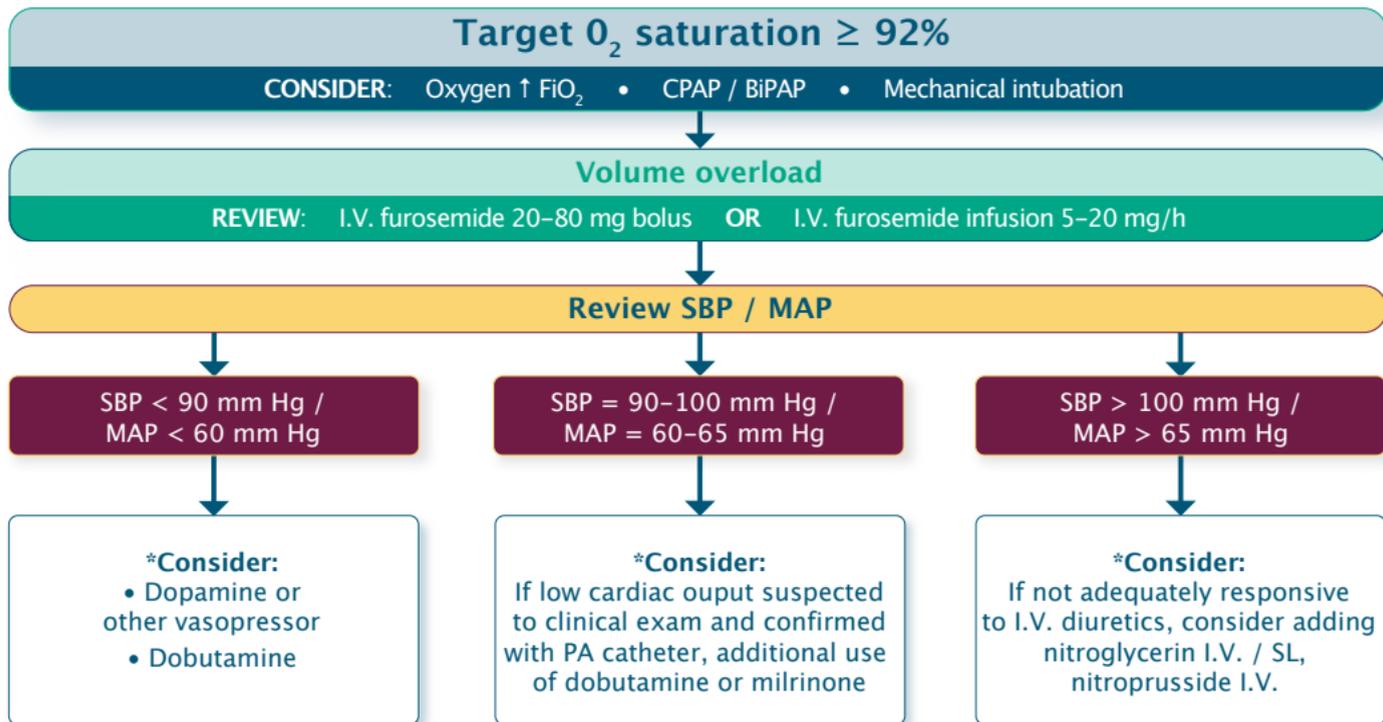
## 🍏 Acute Heart Failure (AHF) - Diagnosis



\*PRIDE or other scoring systems

AHF, acute heart failure; BNP, B-type natriuretic peptide; CBC, complete blood count; Cr, creatinine; ECG, electrocardiogram;

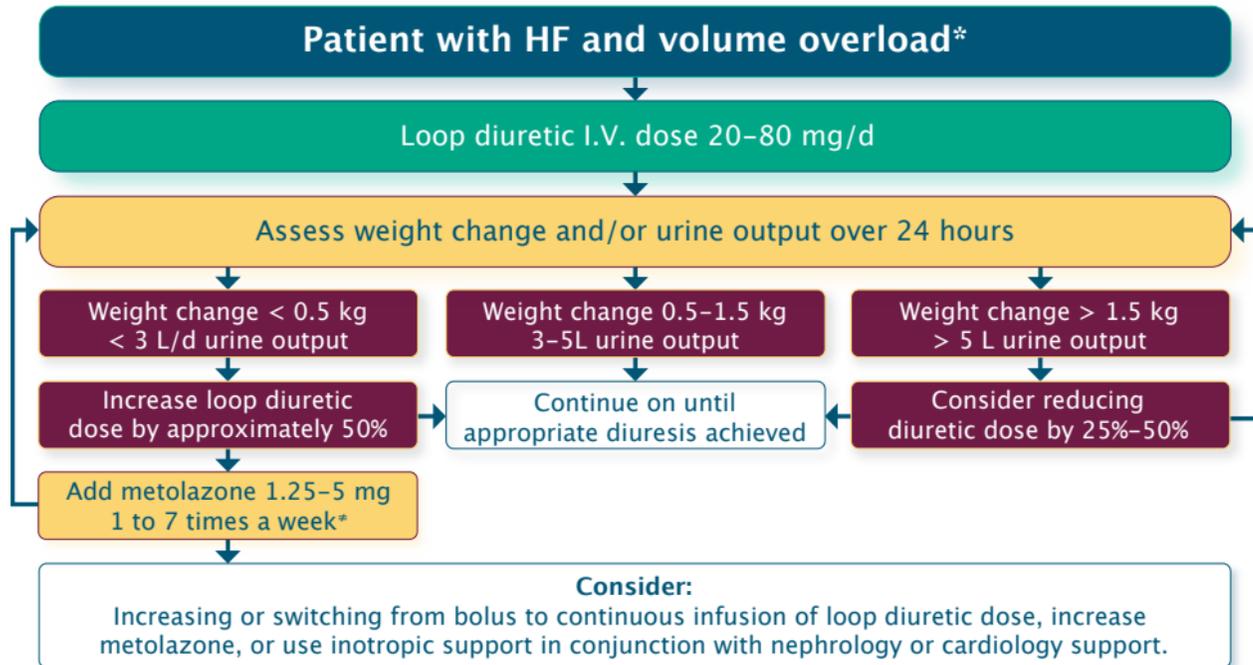
NTproBNP, amino-terminal fragment propeptide B-type natriuretic peptide.



\* See table 27 for dosing (CCS 2017 Heart Failure Guidelines)

BiPAP, bilevel positive airway pressure; BP, blood pressure; CPAP, continuous positive airway pressure; I.V., intravenous; MAP, mean arterial pressure; PA, pulmonary artery; PCWP, pulmonary capillary wedge pressure; SBP, systolic blood pressure.

## 🕒 Acute Heart Failure (AHF) - Diuretic Dosing



\* **Assumes:** 1) Volume assessment with each step

3) Daily weights

2) Monitoring of electrolytes, renal function, symptoms and vital signs

4) Urine output not often accurate or obtainable

≠ Titrate progressively, according to the degree of hypervolemia, furosemide doses and creatinine/kidney function

### Therapeutic Goals for Patients with AHF

- Understanding the etiology of patient's cardiomyopathy and precipitating factors for decompensation
- Alleviate presenting symptoms
- Optimize all indicated evidence-based treatment interventions
- Provide patient education
- Establish a transition of care plan and outpatient follow-up
- Establish euvolemia

### When Response to Diuretic is Suboptimal

- Reevaluate the need for additional diuresis by frequent assessment of volume status
- Restrict sodium and fluid ( $\text{Na}^+$ / $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ) intake
- Review diuretic dosing. Higher bolus doses will be more effective than more frequent lower doses. Diuretic infusions (eg, furosemide 20-40 mg bolus then 5-20 mg/h) can be a useful strategy when other options are not available
- Add another type of diuretic with different site of action (thiazides, spironolactone). Thiazide diuretics (eg oral metolazone 1.25-5 mg 1-7 times a week or hydrochlorothiazide 25-50 mg) can be used with caution
- Consider hemodynamic assessment and/or positive inotropic agents if clinical evidence of poor perfusion coexists with diuretic resistance
- Refer for hemodialysis, ultrafiltration, or other renal replacement strategies if diuresis is impeded by renal insufficiency

## Acute Heart Failure (AHF) - Admit or Discharge from the Emergency Department

Variable	Consider for Hospital Admission	Consider for Discharge Home with Close Follow-up
Current clinical status	NYHA III / IV	NYHA II
Amount of improvement	Minimal or modest	Significant
O <sub>2</sub> saturation on room air	≤ 91%	≥ 92%
Systolic blood pressure	< 90 - 100 mmHg	> 100 mmHg or similar to prior
Heart rate	> 90 bpm	< 90 bpm
Respiratory rate	> 20 breaths/minute	≤ 20 breaths/minute
ECG findings	Active ischemia; ventricular arrhythmia; atrial arrhythmia not under control	Baseline
Renal function	Worsening	Stable
Comorbidity	Other comorbid condition requiring admission; syncope; pneumonia	Comorbidities under control
Other	New diagnosis of HF	Established etiology and precipitant
Follow-up	Uncertain	Established / Organized

### Criteria for Discharge

- Presenting symptoms resolved
- Vital signs resolved and stable for > 24 hrs, especially blood pressure & heart rate
- Returned to “dry” weight and stable for > 24 hours on oral diuretics
- Inter-current cardiac illness adequately diagnosed and treated
- Inter-current non-cardiac illness adequately diagnosed and treated
- Chronic oral HF therapy initiated, titrated and optimized (or outpatient plan for same)
- Education initiated, understood by patient and caregivers, continued education planned
- Discharge plan includes clear requirements for follow-up labs, office appointments and further testing
- Timely communication to primary care provider and/or specialist physician and/or multi-disciplinary disease management program is essential

## Acute Heart Failure (AHF) - Daily Follow-up

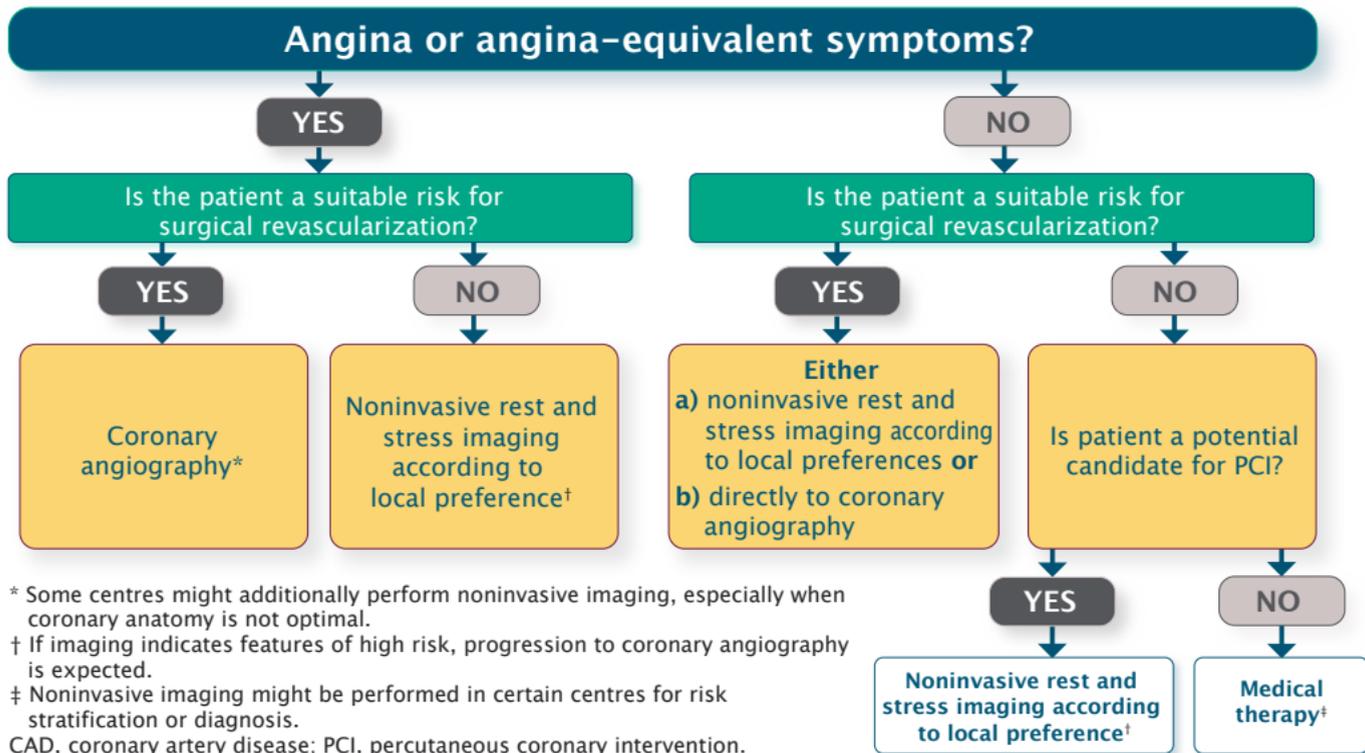
Question/Query	How To Assess	
Have the patients symptoms improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dyspnea</li> <li>• Overall well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other symptoms improved (fatigue, orthopnea, paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea, etc.)</li> </ul>
What are the clinical findings compared with baseline?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood pressure</li> <li>• Respiratory rate</li> <li>• Oxygen saturation</li> <li>• Weight and net fluid balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heart rate</li> <li>• Physical examination findings (<i>especially JVP, S<sub>3</sub>, rales, lower extremity edema</i>)</li> </ul>
What are the pertinent laboratory findings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creatinine</li> <li>• Potassium</li> <li>• BNP or NT-proBNP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hemoglobin</li> <li>• Blood urea nitrogen</li> <li>• Sodium</li> </ul>

JVP, Jugular venous pressure. S<sub>3</sub> third heart sound.

## Approach to Exercise Modalities According to Clinical Scenario

Exercises	Discharged with Heart Failure	NYHA I-III	NYHA IV
<b>Flexibility Exercises</b>	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
<b>Aerobic Exercises</b>	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Suggested modality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected population only</li> <li>Supervision by an expert team needed (see text)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk</li> <li>Treadmill</li> <li>Ergocycle</li> <li>Swimming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected population only</li> <li>Supervision by an expert team needed (see text)</li> </ul>
Intensity		<p><b>Continuous training:</b></p> <p>Moderate intensity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RPE scale 3-5, or</li> <li>65%-85% HRmax, or</li> <li>50%-75% peak VO<sub>2</sub></li> </ul> <p>Moderate intensity aerobic interval might be incorporated in selected patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervals of 15-30 minutes with an RPE scale of 3-5</li> <li>Rest intervals of 15-30 minutes</li> </ul>	
Frequency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting with 2-3 days per week</li> <li>Goal: 5 days per week</li> </ul>	
Duration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting with 10-15 minutes</li> <li>Goal: 30 minutes</li> </ul>	
<b>Isometric / Resistance Exercises</b>		Recommended	
Intensity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10-20 repetitions of 5 to 10-pound free weights</li> </ul>	
Frequency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2-3 days per week</li> </ul>	

HRmax, maximal heart rate; NYHA, New York Heart Association; RPE, rating perceived exertion; VO<sub>2</sub>, peak oxygen uptake.



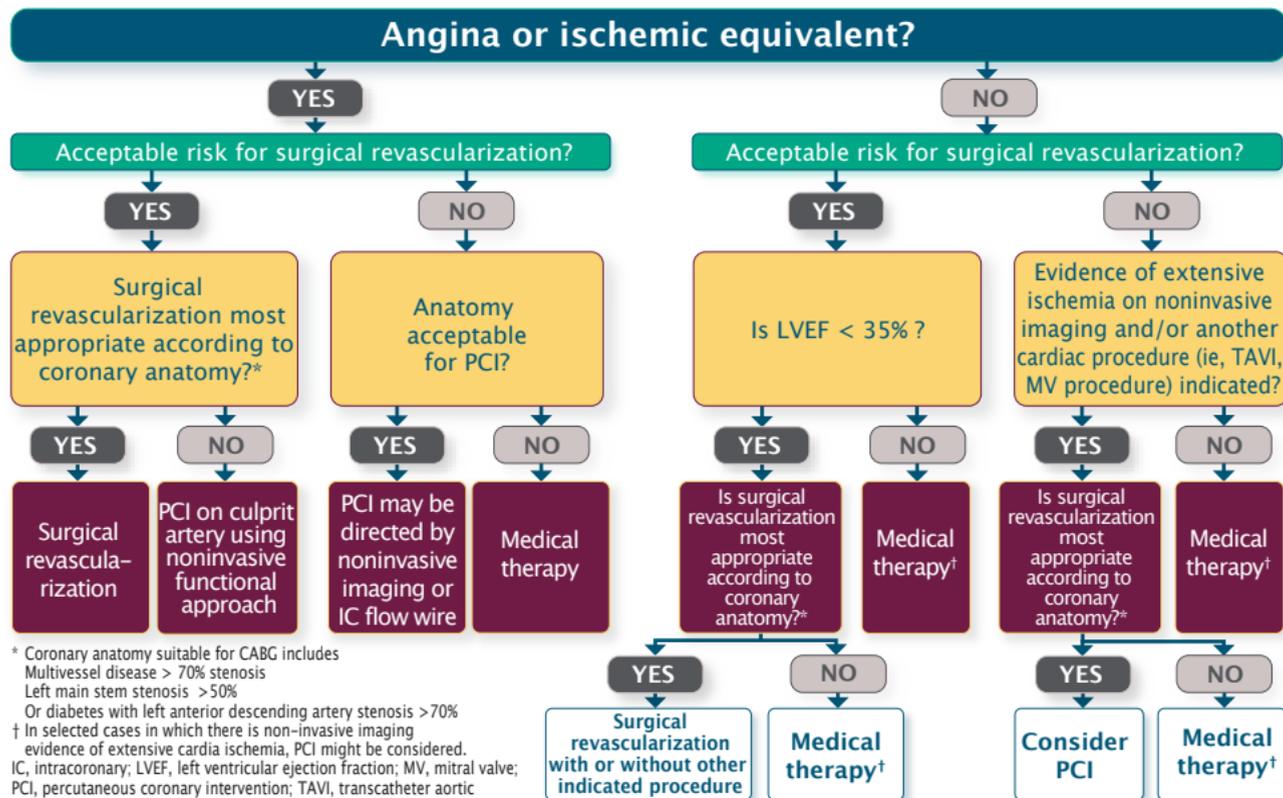
\* Some centres might additionally perform noninvasive imaging, especially when coronary anatomy is not optimal.

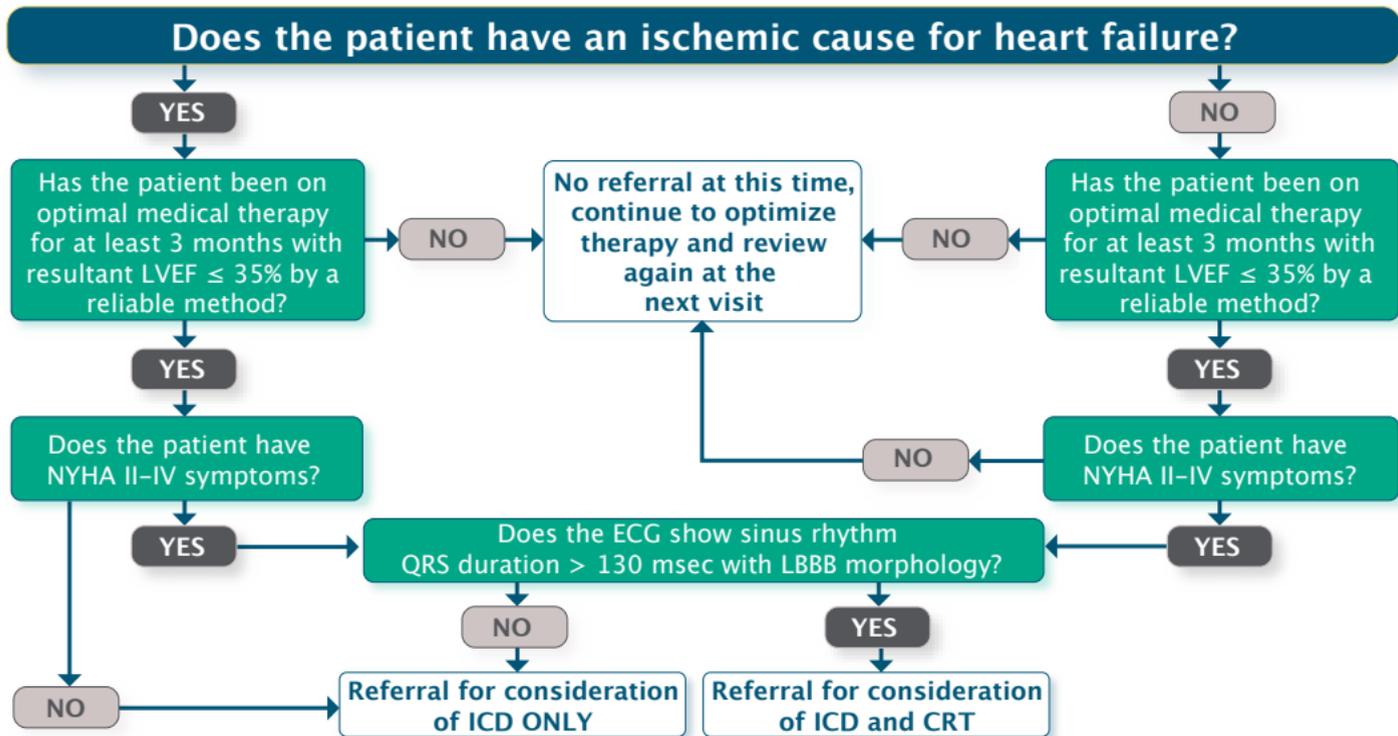
† If imaging indicates features of high risk, progression to coronary angiography is expected.

‡ Noninvasive imaging might be performed in certain centres for risk stratification or diagnosis.

CAD, coronary artery disease; PCI, percutaneous coronary intervention.

## Decision Regarding Coronary Revascularization in Heart Failure (HF)





\*ICDs should generally not be considered in patients with NYHA IV symptoms and poor one-year survival, unless concomitant CRT is planned (where CRT would be expected to improve symptoms), or in patients who are being considered for advanced therapies such as cardiac transplantation  
 CRT, cardiac resynchronization therapy; ECG, electrocardiogram; ICD, implantable cardioverter-defibrillator; LBBB, left bundle branch block; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; NYHA, New York Heart Association.

## Classifying Advanced Heart Failure

To be considered for advanced HF management strategies (cardiac transplantation, MCS, palliative care, etc.) patients with advanced HF must, despite optimal treatment, continue to exhibit progressive/persistent NYHA III or IV HF symptoms and accompanied by more than one of the following:

- LVEF < 25% and, if measured, peak exercise oxygen consumption < 14 mL/kg/min (or < 50% predicted)
- Evidence of progressive end organ dysfunction due to reduced perfusion and not to inadequate ventricular filling pressures
- Recurrent HF hospitalizations ( $\geq 2$  in 12 months) not due to a clearly reversible cause
- Need to progressively reduce or eliminate evidence based HF therapies such as ACEis, MRAs, or B-blockers, because of circulatory-renal limitations such as renal insufficiency or symptomatic hypotension.
- Diuretic refractoriness associated with worsening renal function
- Requirement for inotropic support for symptomatic relief or to maintain end organ function
- Worsening right HF (RHF) and secondary pulmonary hypertension
- Six-minute walk distance < 300 m
- Increased 1-year mortality (eg, > 20%-25%) predicted by HF risk scores
- Progressive renal or hepatic end organ dysfunction
- Persistent hyponatremia (serum sodium < 134 mmol/L)
- Cardiac cachexia
- Inability to perform activities of daily living

**Note:** most patients will have a number of the listed criteria and there is no single criterion that determines candidacy for cardiac transplantation, MCS, or palliative care. Patient preferences should be incorporated into the decision process when assessing further choices.

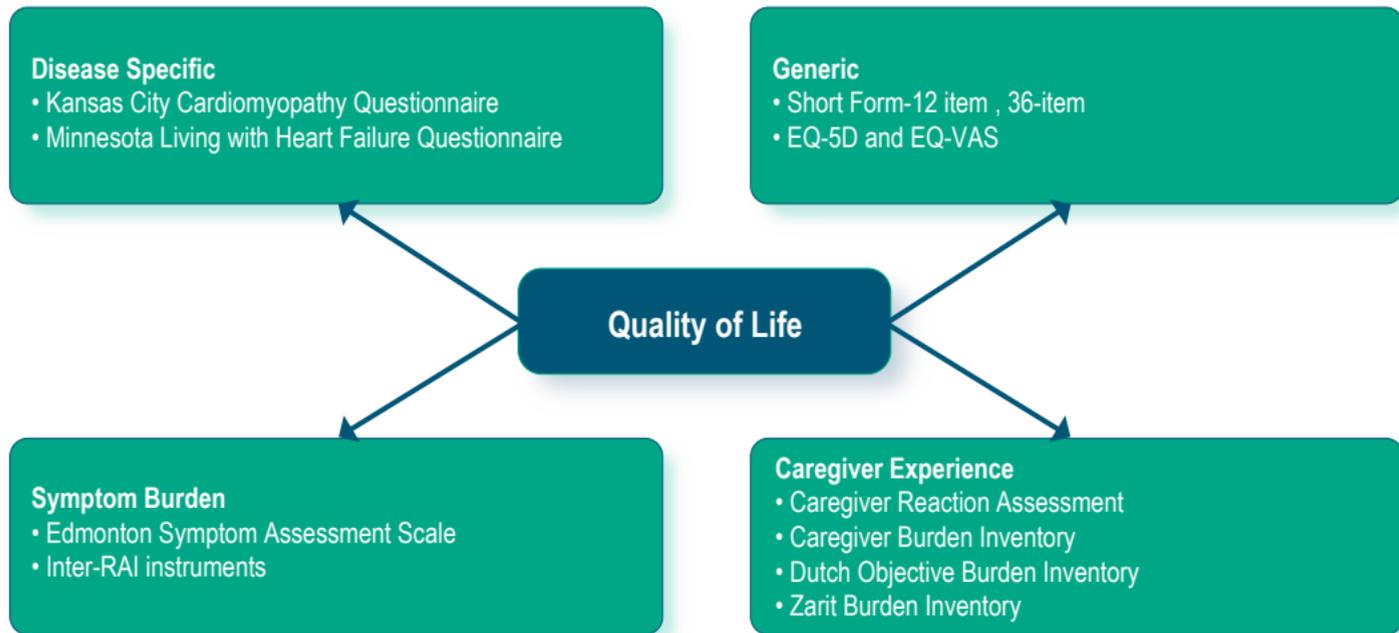
## Advance Care Planning

### Practical Tips

- Although the course of HF in individual patients can be unpredictable, a high symptom burden and high mortality rates should be anticipated, and advance care planning discussions should be initiated early in the course of illness.
- Triggers for discussion:
  - After important clinical events such as hospitalization
  - When considering invasive therapies
  - When requested by the patient/family
- Discussions should focus on the values and goals of the individual patient what they find valuable and important in their lives and what they hope for in the future (eg, attending an important upcoming family event).
- Discussions are dynamic and evolve over time; ongoing and repeated discussions are often necessary.

Visit <http://www.advancecareplanning.ca/> for tools and resources to help patients and families with advance care planning.

## Validated Tools in HF



The above is not intended to be an exhaustive list of such instruments, but identifies those most used and evaluated in the context of heart failure. There is no clear evidence to recommend one tool over another.

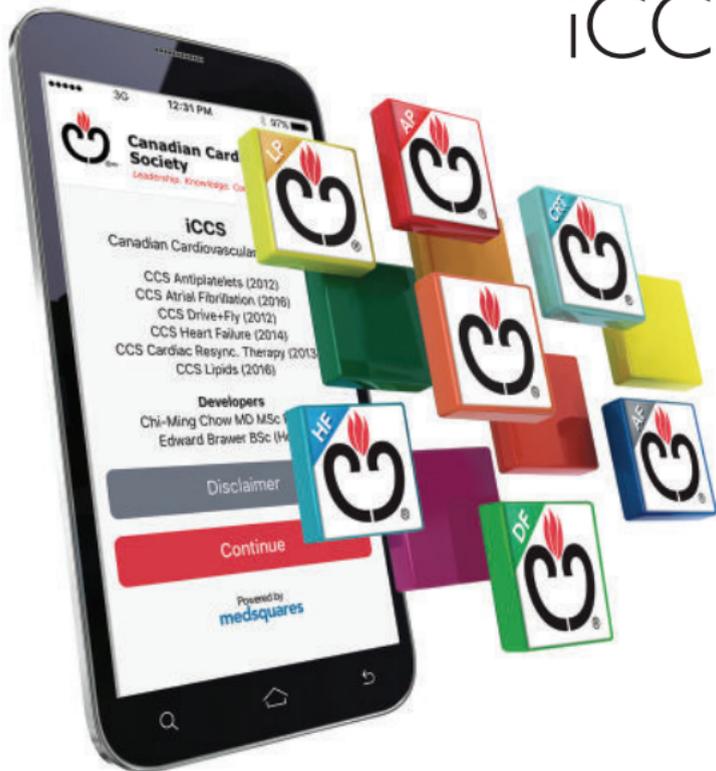
EQ-5D, Euro QOL 5 dimensions; EQ-VAS, Euro QOL-Visual Analogue Scale

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Printing of this pocket guide made possible through funding provided by Novartis and Servier.