

Anatomy Tip

Congestive Heart Failure

In an effort to aid Health Information Management Coding Professionals with ICD-10 readiness, the following physiology tip is provided with an educational intent.

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Defined

CHF as a condition in which cardiac function is reduced so that the heart inadequately pumps blood at a rate to meet the need of the body's tissues and/or allows it to do so only from an abnormally elevated ventricular diastolic pressure.

Signs and Symptoms of CHF

Fatigue, generalized weakness,	Pulmonary edema/pleural effusion
Confusion, reduced perfusion to the brain	Shortness of breath/rales/hypoxemia
Cough, cyanosis	Pedal edema/fluid overload
Paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea	Renal Insufficiency
Unusual heart sounds	Elevated jugular pressure, hepatic enlargement
Pulse faster on alternative beats	Narrow pulse pressure, cool extremities

Types of CHF

Diastolic congestive heart failure

- Failure to pump enough blood or only at an elevated filling pressure.
- The heart has trouble relaxing adequately between contractions, (diastole), to allow enough blood to enter the ventricles.
- Heart wall thickness and left ventricular mass is increased.
- Ejection fraction is usually normal, at 50% or greater.
- Causes include elderly, hypertension, arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease, tachyarrhythmias, myocardial ischemia, (without infarction), hemochromatosis, amyloidosis, type II diabetes, hypertrophic/restrictive cardiomyopathy, constrictive pericarditis.

Systolic congestive heart failure

- Limited heart contractibility and the inability to pump out an adequate blood supply during contraction, (systole).
- Blood coming from the to the heart may back up and cause fluid leakage back into the lungs
- The most common type of CHF
- Ejection fraction is less than 40%.
- Causes include hypertensive or ischemic heart disease, toxins, (drugs, alcohol), valvular disease, (stenosis and regurgitation), viral and other myocarditis, (Rheumatic fevers), congenital diseases, complications of cardiac surgery, and pregnancy, and arrhythmias, (fibrillation, bundle branch blocks).

References/Resources: 1. Dorland's Medical Dictionary 2. Harrison's Textbook of Medicine

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