LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of the chapter, the reader will be able to:

1. Discuss the epidemiology of acute decompensated heart failure, including its prevalence and impact on health care expenditures.
2. Assess a patient with heart failure decompensation, determine potential etiology of the decompensation, and make recommendations to improve the patient’s clinical status or prevent future decompensations.
3. Differentiate the signs and symptoms of acute decompensated heart failure due to fluid overload and due to low cardiac output.
4. Design an appropriate pharmacotherapy regimen for a patient with acute decompensated heart failure.
5. Construct a treatment algorithm for patients with decompensated heart failure, based on hemodynamic parameters.
6. Compare and contrast the use of dobutamine versus milrinone in the treatment of acute decompensated heart failure.
7. Devise a plan to produce effective diuresis in a patient who is exhibiting diuretic resistance. Explain the mechanistic basis for diuretic resistance, and the mechanism by which your treatment approach will overcome it.
8. Describe the place in therapy of dopamine, and the pharmacologic properties it exhibits at various doses.
10. Differentiate the role of various vasodilators in the management of acute decompensated heart failure.
11. Be aware of various mechanical circulatory support and surgical options for end-stage heart failure patients.
12. Describe appropriate measures to prepare for discharging a patient with acute decompensated heart failure from the hospital including pertinent patient counseling.