

Guidance for Triage of Non-Emergent Outpatient Transthoracic Echocardiograms During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Tiers	Definition	Effect on treatment	Examples	Action
Tier 1a	Low acuity TTE/asymptomatic patient Not life threatening.	Results will not affect short-term treatment or outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All routine surveillance without change in clinical status, e.g., severe valve disease, prosthetic valves, aortic disease, or cardiomyopathy Asymptomatic, abnormal ECG 	Postpone study
Tier 1b	Low acuity TTE/symptomatic patient Not life threatening.	Results will not affect short-term treatment or outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syncope, low suspicion cardiac cause New onset atrial fibrillation, asymptomatic Pre-solid organ (non-urgent) transplant 	Postpone study
Tier 2a	Intermediate acuity TTE/asymptomatic patient Not life threatening but potential for future morbidity and mortality.	Results will affect medium-term treatment or outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newly discovered murmur with need for urgent non-cardiac surgery Follow-up severe VHD without symptoms Follow-up RV function post PE; LV function post Takotsubo; pericardial effusion 	Expert consultation*/consider need for study vs. postpone
Tier 2b	Intermediate acuity TTE/symptomatic patient Not life threatening but potential for future morbidity and mortality.	Results will affect medium-term treatment or outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Known heart or lung disease with new symptoms HFrEF where EF determines medical or device therapy Evaluation post OHT e.g., rejection 	Expert consultation*/do not postpone study
Tier 3	High acuity TTE/symptomatic or asymptomatic patient Potentially life threatening	Results will affect short-term treatment or outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New symptoms c/w significant cardiopulmonary disease Echo needed for continuation of chemotherapy Concern for significant pericardial effusion/tamponade 	Do not postpone

*Expert consultation refers to review by an echocardiography attending physician, and discussion with the referring health care professional if needed.

Adapted from the American College of Surgeons Elective Surgery Acuity Scale (ESAS), authored by Sameer Siddiqui M.D., with permission.

References

1. ACCF/AHA/ASNC/HFSA/HRS/SCAI/SCCM/SCCT/SCMR 2011 Appropriate Use Criteria for Echocardiography. A Report of the American College of Cardiology Foundation Appropriate Use Criteria Task Force, American Society of Echocardiography, American Heart Association, American Society of Nuclear Cardiology, Heart Failure Society of America, Heart Rhythm Society, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society of Critical Care Medicine, Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography, Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance American College of Chest Physicians. [J Am Soc Echocardiogr](#). 2011 Mar;24(3):229-67. doi: 10.1016/j.echo.2010.12.008.
2. American College of Surgeons. COVID-19: Guidance for Triage of Non-Emergent Surgical Procedures. Elective Surgery Acuity Scale (ESAS) <https://www.facs.org/covid-19/clinical-guidance/triage>. Accessed 3/30/2020.