

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Angie Porter
919-297-7152
aporter@ASEcho.org

American Society of Echocardiography Releases Updated Rheumatic Heart Disease Guideline
The guideline focuses on the use of echocardiography in the evaluation and management of patients with Rheumatic Heart Disease

(DURHAM, NC, Jan. 4, 2023)—Acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease (RHD) pose major health problems globally and remain the most common cardiovascular disease in children and young people worldwide. Echocardiography is the most important diagnostic tool in recognizing this preventable and treatable disease. It plays an invaluable role in detecting the presence of subclinical disease and assessing the need for prompt therapy or follow-up evaluation.

The [American Society of Echocardiography \(ASE\)](#) released a new guideline document, [***Recommendations for the Use of Echocardiography in the Evaluation of Rheumatic Heart Disease: A Report from the American Society of Echocardiography***](#), which provides recommendations for the comprehensive use of echocardiography in the diagnosis and therapeutic intervention of RHD. This document was endorsed by 25 ASE International Alliance Partners and is published in the January 2023 issue of the [Journal of the American Society of Echocardiography](#).

The document is an update to previous guideline documents originally published in 2007 and 2009 that focused on valvular stenosis or valvular regurgitation etiology. This new guideline is the first document that addresses all cardiac abnormalities caused by RHD.

ASE's lead author **Natesa G. Pandian, MD, FACC**, explained echocardiography is indispensable in managing the disease, and it is important for physicians to learn and teach how to apply echocardiography in the evaluation of RHD to treat patients.

"RHD is a global and regional burden in both economically constrained and advanced countries. The disease can evolve anywhere where there is a lack of sanitary conditions, access to primary care and health education," he said. "It starts with a sore throat and fever, and if it is not recognized as a Streptococcal infection and treated, it can go on to cause rheumatic fever, cardiac inflammation, and chronic heart disease with a spectrum of debilitating lesions. Often, chronic lesions are recognized late because of slowly evolving symptoms. Echocardiography, with its multifaceted imaging approach, plays a critical role in the diagnosis, assessment of severity, detection of complications and in guiding therapy."

This document and all guidelines published by ASE are available at ASEcho.org/Guidelines.

About American Society of Echocardiography

The American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) is the Society for Cardiovascular Ultrasound Professionals™. ASE is the largest global organization for cardiovascular ultrasound imaging serving physicians, sonographers, nurses, veterinarians, and scientists and as such is the leader and advocate, setting practice standards and guidelines for the field. The Society is committed to advancing cardiovascular ultrasound to improve lives. For more information, visit the ASE website [ASEcho.org](https://www.asecho.org) or social media pages on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Instagram](#).

###