2014 AHA/ACC Guideline for the Management of Patients With Valvular Heart Disease: Executive Summary: A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Practice Guidelines

Rick A. Nishimura, Catherine M. Otto, Robert O. Bonow, Blase A. Carabello, John P. Erwin III, Robert A. Guyton, Patrick T. O’Gara, Carlos E. Ruiz, Nikolaos J. Skubas, Paul Sorajja, Thoralf M. Sundt III and James D. Thomas

Circulation. published online March 3, 2014;
Circulation is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
Copyright © 2014 American Heart Association, Inc. All rights reserved.
Print ISSN: 0009-7322. Online ISSN: 1524-4539

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2014/02/27/CIR.0000000000000029.citation

Data Supplement (unedited) at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/suppl/2014/03/03/CIR.0000000000000029.DC1.html
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/suppl/2014/03/03/CIR.0000000000000029.DC2.html

Permissions: Requests for permissions to reproduce figures, tables, or portions of articles originally published in Circulation can be obtained via RightsLink, a service of the Copyright Clearance Center, not the Editorial Office. Once the online version of the published article for which permission is being requested is located, click Request Permissions in the middle column of the Web page under Services. Further information about this process is available in the Permissions and Rights Question and Answer document.

Reprints: Information about reprints can be found online at:
http://www.lww.com/reprints

Subscriptions: Information about subscribing to Circulation is online at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/subscriptions/
2014 AHA/ACC Guideline for the Management of Patients With Valvular Heart Disease: Executive Summary

A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Practice Guidelines

Developed in Collaboration With the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, American Society of Echocardiography, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, and Society of Thoracic Surgeons

WRITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS*

Rick A. Nishimura, MD, MACC, FAHA, Co-Chair†
Catherine M. Otto, MD, FACC, FAHA, Co-Chair†
Robert O. Bonow, MD, MACC, FAHA†
Blase A. Carabello, MD, FACC*†
John P. Erwin III, MD, FACC, FAHA‡
Robert A. Guyton, MD, FACC*§
Patrick T. O’Gara, MD, FACC, FAHA†
Carlos E. Ruiz, MD, PhD, FACC†
Nikolaos J. Skubas, MD, FASE¶
Paul Sorajja, MD, FACC, FAHA#
Thoralf M. Sundt III, MD* **††
James D. Thomas, MD, FASE, FACC, FAHA‡‡

ACC/AHA TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Jeffrey L. Anderson, MD, FACC, FAHA, Chair
Jonathan L. Halperin, MD, FACC, FAHA, Chair-Elect
Nancy M. Albert, PhD, CCNS, CCRN, FAHA
Biykem Bozkurt, MD, PhD, FACC, FAHA
Ralph G. Brindis, MD, MPH, MACC
Mark A. Creager, MD, FACC, FAHA §§
Lesley H. Curtis, PhD, FAHA
David DeMets, PhD
Robert A. Guyton, MD, FACC §§
Clyde W. Yancy, MD, FACC, FAHA §§
Judith S. Hochman, MD, FACC, FAHA
Richard J. Kovalcs, MD, FACC, FAHA
E. Magnus Ohman, MD, FACC
Susan J. Pressler, PhD, RN, FAHA
Frank W. Sellke, MD, FACC, FAHA
Win-Kuang Shen, MD, FACC, FAHA
William G. Stevenson, MD, FACC, FAHA §§

*Writing committee members are required to recuse themselves from voting on sections to which their specific relationships with industry and other entities may apply; see Appendix 1 for recusal information.
†ACC/AHA representative.
‡ACC/AHA Task Force on Performance Measures liaison.
§ACC/AHA Task Force on Practice Guidelines liaison.
*†Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists representative.
‡Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions representative.
**American Association for Thoracic Surgery representative.
††American Association for Thoracic Surgeons representative.
‡‡American Society of Echocardiography representative.
§§Former Task Force member during the writing effort.
Nishimura, RA et al.
2014 AHA/ACC Valvular Heart Disease Guideline


This document was approved by the American College of Cardiology Board of Trustees and the American Heart Association Science Advisory and Coordinating Committee in January 2014.

The online-only Data Supplement is available with this article at http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000000299/-/DC1.

The online-only Comprehensive Relationships With Industry table is available with this article at http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000000299/-/DC2.


This article has been copublished in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

Copies: This document is available on the World Wide Web sites of the American College of Cardiology (www.cardiosource.org) and the American Heart Association (my.americanheart.org). A copy of the document is available at http://my.americanheart.org/statements by selecting either the “By Topic” link or the “By Publication Date” link. To purchase additional reprints, call 843-216-2533 or e-mail kelle.ramsay@wolterskluwer.com.

Expert peer review of AHA Scientific Statements is conducted by the AHA Office of Science Operations. For more on AHA statements and guidelines development, visit http://my.americanheart.org/statements and select the “Policies and Development” link.

Permissions: Multiple copies, modification, alteration, enhancement, and/or distribution of this document are not permitted without the express permission of the American Heart Association. Instructions for obtaining permission are located at http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/General/Copyright-Permission-Guidelines_UCM_300404_Article.jsp. A link to the “Copyright Permissions Request Form” appears on the right side of the page.

*(Circulation. 2014;129:000–000.)*

© 2014 by the American Heart Association, Inc., and the American College of Cardiology Foundation.
Table of Contents

Preamble .................................................................................................................................................................. 5
1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................................................ 9
   1.1. Methodology and Evidence Review ............................................................................................................. 9
   1.2. Organization of the Writing Committee ...................................................................................................... 9
   1.3. Document Review and Approval .................................................................................................................. 9
   1.4. Scope of the Guideline ................................................................................................................................... 10
2. General Principles ................................................................................................................................................ 11
   2.1. Evaluation of the Patient With Suspected VHD ............................................................................................ 11
   2.2. Definitions of Severity of Valve Disease ....................................................................................................... 11
   2.3. Diagnostic Testing—Diagnosis and Follow-Up: Recommendations ............................................................. 12
   2.4. Basic Principles of Medical Therapy: Recommendations ............................................................................. 13
   2.5. Evaluation of Surgical and Interventional Risk ............................................................................................ 14
   2.6. The Heart Valve Team and Heart Valve Centers of Excellence: Recommendations ..................................... 14
3. Aortic Stenosis: Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 16
   3.1. Stages of Valvular AS .................................................................................................................................. 16
   3.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ............................................................................................................................ 19
   3.3. Medical Therapy .......................................................................................................................................... 19
   3.4. Timing of Intervention .................................................................................................................................. 19
   3.5. Choice of Intervention ................................................................................................................................ 22
4. Aortic Regurgitation: Recommendations ......................................................................................................... 23
   4.1. Stages of Chronic Aortic Regurgitation ........................................................................................................ 23
   4.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ............................................................................................................................ 27
   4.3. Medical Therapy .......................................................................................................................................... 27
   4.4. Timing of Intervention .................................................................................................................................. 27
5. Bicuspid Aortic Valve and Aortopathy: Recommendations ................................................................................ 29
   5.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ............................................................................................................................ 29
   5.2. Intervention .................................................................................................................................................. 29
6. Mitral Stenosis: Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 29
   6.1. Stages of MS ................................................................................................................................................ 29
   6.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ............................................................................................................................ 32
   6.3. Medical Therapy .......................................................................................................................................... 32
   6.4. Intervention .................................................................................................................................................. 32
7. Mitral Regurgitation: Recommendations ......................................................................................................... 34
   7.1. Stages of Chronic MR .................................................................................................................................. 34
   7.2. Chronic Primary MR ..................................................................................................................................... 38
      7.2.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ......................................................................................................................... 38
      7.2.2. Medical Therapy ..................................................................................................................................... 38
      7.2.3. Intervention ............................................................................................................................................. 38
   7.3. Chronic Secondary MR .................................................................................................................................. 40
      7.3.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ......................................................................................................................... 40
      7.3.2. Medical Therapy ..................................................................................................................................... 40
      7.3.3. Intervention ............................................................................................................................................. 41
8. Tricuspid Valve Disease: Recommendations .................................................................................................... 42
   8.1. Stages of TR .................................................................................................................................................. 42
   8.2. Tricuspid Regurgitation ............................................................................................................................... 46
      8.2.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ......................................................................................................................... 46
      8.2.2. Medical Therapy ..................................................................................................................................... 46
      8.2.3. Intervention ............................................................................................................................................. 46
   8.3. Stages of Tricuspid Stenosis ........................................................................................................................ 47
   8.4. Tricuspid Stenosis ......................................................................................................................................... 47
      8.4.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ......................................................................................................................... 48
      8.4.2. Intervention ............................................................................................................................................. 48
9. Stages of Pulmonic Valve Disease ................................................................................................................... 48
10. Prosthetic Valves: Recommendations ............................................................................................................... 49
   10.1. Evaluation and Selection of Prosthetic Valves ........................................................................................... 49
      10.1.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ....................................................................................................................... 49
Appendix 2. Reviewer Relationships With Industry and Other Entities (Relevant) .............................................................. 69

References .............................................................................................................................................................................. 80

12. Pregnancy and VHD: Recommendations ......................................................................................................................... 57
  12.1. Native Valve Stenosis ............................................................................................................................................... 57
    12.1.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up .................................................................................................................................. 58
    12.1.2. Medical Therapy ............................................................................................................................................... 58
    12.1.3. Intervention ....................................................................................................................................................... 58
  12.2. Native Valve Regurgitation ...................................................................................................................................... 59
    12.2.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ................................................................................................................................. 59
    12.2.2. Medical Therapy ............................................................................................................................................... 59
    12.2.3. Intervention ....................................................................................................................................................... 59
  12.3. Prosthetic Valves in Pregnancy ................................................................................................................................. 60
    12.3.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up ................................................................................................................................. 60
    12.3.2. Medical Therapy ............................................................................................................................................... 60

13. Surgical Considerations: Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 63
  13.1. Evaluation of Coronary Anatomy ............................................................................................................................. 63
  13.2. Concomitant Procedures ........................................................................................................................................... 63
    13.2.1. Intervention for CAD ........................................................................................................................................ 63
    13.2.2. Intervention for AF ........................................................................................................................................... 64

14. Noncardiac Surgery in Patients With VHD: Recommendations ...................................................................................... 65

Appendix 1. Author Relationships With Industry and Other Entities (Relevant) ................................................................. 66
Appendix 2. Reviewer Relationships With Industry and Other Entities (Relevant) ................................................................. 69
References.............................................................................................................................................................................. 80
Preamble
The medical profession should play a central role in evaluating evidence related to drugs, devices, and procedures for detection, management, and prevention of disease. When properly applied, expert analysis of available data on the benefits and risks of these therapies and procedures can improve the quality of care, optimize patient outcomes, and favorably affect costs by focusing resources on the most effective strategies. An organized and directed approach to a thorough review of evidence has resulted in the production of clinical practice guidelines that assist clinicians in selecting the best management strategy for an individual patient. Moreover, clinical practice guidelines can provide a foundation for other applications, such as performance measures, appropriate use criteria, and both quality improvement and clinical decision support tools.

The American College of Cardiology (ACC) and the American Heart Association (AHA) have jointly engaged in the production of guidelines in the area of cardiovascular disease since 1980. The ACC/AHA Task Force on Practice Guidelines (Task Force) directs this effort by developing, updating, and revising practice guidelines for cardiovascular diseases and procedures.

Experts in the subject under consideration are selected from both ACC and AHA to examine subject-specific data and write guidelines. Writing committees are specifically charged with performing a literature review, weighing the strength of evidence for or against particular tests, treatments, or procedures, and including estimates of expected health outcomes where such data exist. Patient-specific modifiers, comorbidities, and issues of patient preference that may influence the choice of tests or therapies are considered, as well as frequency of follow-up and cost effectiveness. When available, information from studies on cost is considered; however, review of data on efficacy and outcomes constitutes the primary basis for preparing recommendations in this guideline.

In analyzing the data and developing recommendations and supporting text, the writing committee uses evidence-based methodologies developed by the Task Force (1). The Class of Recommendation (COR) is an estimate of the size of the treatment effect, with consideration given to risks versus benefits, as well as evidence and/or agreement that a given treatment or procedure is or is not useful/effective or in some situations may cause harm. The Level of Evidence (LOE) is an estimate of the certainty or precision of the treatment effect. The writing committee reviews and ranks evidence supporting each recommendation, with the weight of evidence ranked as LOE A, B, or C, according to specific definitions. The schema for the COR and LOE is summarized in Table 1, which also provides suggested phrases for writing recommendations within each COR. Studies are identified as observational, retrospective, prospective, or randomized, as appropriate. For certain conditions for which inadequate data are available, recommendations are based on expert consensus and clinical experience and are ranked as LOE C. When recommendations at LOE C are supported by historical clinical data, appropriate references (including clinical reviews) are cited if available. For issues with sparse available data, a survey of current practice among the clinician members of the writing committee is the basis for LOE C recommendations and no references are cited.
Nishimura, RA et al.
2014 AHA/ACC Valvular Heart Disease Guideline

A new addition to this methodology is separation of the Class III recommendations to delineate whether the recommendation is determined to be of “no benefit” or is associated with “harm” to the patient. In addition, in view of the increasing number of comparative effectiveness studies, comparator verbs and suggested phrases for writing recommendations for the comparative effectiveness of one treatment or strategy versus another are included for COR I and IIa, LOE A or B only.

In view of the advances in medical therapy across the spectrum of cardiovascular diseases, the Task Force has designated the term guideline-directed medical therapy (GDMT) to represent optimal medical therapy as defined by ACC/AHA guideline (primarily Class I)-recommended therapies. This new term, GDMT, is used herein and throughout subsequent guidelines.

Because the ACC/AHA practice guidelines address patient populations (and clinicians) residing in North America, drugs that are not currently available in North America are discussed in the text without a specific COR. For studies performed in large numbers of subjects outside North America, each writing committee reviews the potential impact of different practice patterns and patient populations on the treatment effect and relevance to the ACC/AHA target population to determine whether the findings should inform a specific recommendation.

The ACC/AHA practice guidelines are intended to assist clinicians in clinical decision making by describing a range of generally acceptable approaches to the diagnosis, management, and prevention of specific diseases or conditions. The guidelines attempt to define practices that meet the needs of most patients in most circumstances. The ultimate judgment about care of a particular patient must be made by the clinician and patient in light of all the circumstances presented by that patient. As a result, situations may arise in which deviations from these guidelines may be appropriate. Clinical decision making should involve consideration of the quality and availability of expertise in the area where care is provided. When these guidelines are used as the basis for regulatory or payer decisions, the goal should be improvement in quality of care. The Task Force recognizes that situations arise in which additional data are needed to inform patient care more effectively; these areas are identified within each respective guideline when appropriate.

Prescribed courses of treatment in accordance with these recommendations are effective only if followed. Because lack of patient understanding and adherence may adversely affect outcomes, clinicians should make every effort to engage the patient’s active participation in prescribed medical regimens and lifestyles. In addition, patients should be informed of the risks, benefits, and alternatives to a particular treatment and should be involved in shared decision making whenever feasible, particularly for COR IIa and IIb, for which the benefit-to-risk ratio may be lower.

The Task Force makes every effort to avoid actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of relationships with industry and other entities (RWI) among the members of the writing committee. All writing committee members and peer reviewers of the guideline are required to disclose all
In December 2009, the ACC and AHA implemented a new RWI policy that requires the writing committee chair plus a minimum of 50% of the writing committee to have no relevant RWI (Appendix 1 includes the ACC/AHA definition of relevance). The Task Force and all writing committee members review their respective RWI disclosures during each conference call and/or meeting of the writing committee, and members provide updates to their RWI as changes occur. All guideline recommendations require a confidential vote by the writing committee and require approval by a consensus of the voting members. Authors’ and peer reviewers’ RWI pertinent to this guideline are disclosed in Appendixes 1 and 2. Members may not draft or vote on any recommendations pertaining to their RWI. Members who recused themselves from voting are indicated in the list of writing committee members with specific section recusals noted in Appendix 1. In addition, to ensure complete transparency, writing committee members’ comprehensive disclosure information—including RWI not pertinent to this document—is available as an online supplement at http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000000029/-/DC2.

Comprehensive disclosure information for the Task Force is also available online at http://www.cardiosource.org/en/ACC/About-ACC/Who-We-Are/Leadership/Guidelines-and-Documents-Task-Forces.aspx. The ACC and AHA exclusively sponsor the work of the writing committee without commercial support. Writing committee members volunteered their time for this activity. Guidelines are official policy of both the ACC and AHA.

In an effort to maintain relevance at the point of care for clinicians, the Task Force continues to oversee an ongoing process improvement initiative. As a result, several changes to these guidelines will be apparent, including limited narrative text, a focus on summary and evidence tables (with references linked to abstracts in PubMed), and more liberal use of summary recommendation tables (with references that support LOE) to serve as a quick reference.

In April 2011, the Institute of Medicine released 2 reports: Finding What Works in Health Care: Standards for Systematic Reviews and Clinical Practice Guidelines We Can Trust (2, 3). It is noteworthy that the Institute of Medicine cited ACC/AHA practice guidelines as being compliant with many of the proposed standards. A thorough review of these reports and of our current methodology is under way, with further enhancements anticipated.

The recommendations in this guideline are considered current until they are superseded by a focused update, the full-text guideline is revised, or until a published addendum declares it out of date and no longer official ACC/AHA policy. The reader is encouraged to consult the full-text guideline (4) for additional guidance and details about valvular heart disease (VHD), since the executive summary contains only the recommendations.
Table 1. Applying Classification of Recommendations and Level of Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Multiple populations evaluated*&lt;br&gt;Data derived from multiple randomized clinical trials or meta-analyses</td>
<td>Recommendation that procedure or treatment is useful/effective&lt;br&gt;Sufficient evidence from multiple randomized trials or meta-analyses</td>
<td>Recommendation that procedure or treatment is useful/effective&lt;br&gt;Sufficient evidence from multiple randomized trials or meta-analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Limited populations evaluated*&lt;br&gt;Data derived from single randomized trial or nonrandomized studies</td>
<td>Recommendation in favor of treatment or procedure being useful/effective&lt;br&gt;Some conflicting evidence from multiple randomized trials or meta-analyses</td>
<td>Recommendation’s usefulness/efficacy less well established&lt;br&gt;Greater conflicting evidence from multiple randomized trials or meta-analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Very limited populations evaluated*&lt;br&gt;Only consensus opinion of experts, case studies, or standard of care</td>
<td>Recommendation in favor of treatment or procedure being useful/effective&lt;br&gt;Only diverging expert opinion, case studies, or standard of care</td>
<td>Recommendation’s usefulness/efficacy less well established&lt;br&gt;Only diverging expert opinion, case studies, or standard of care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A recommendation with Level of Evidence B or C does not imply that the recommendation is weak. Many important clinical questions addressed in the guidelines do not lend themselves to clinical trials. Although randomized trials are unavailable, there may be a very clear clinical consensus that a particular test or therapy is useful or effective.

*Data available from clinical trials or registries about the usefulness/efficacy in different subpopulations, such as sex, age, history of diabetes mellitus, history of prior myocardial infarction, history of heart failure, and prior aspirin use.

†For comparative-effectiveness recommendations (Class I and IIa; Level of Evidence A and B only), studies that support the use of comparator verbs should involve direct comparisons of the treatments or strategies being evaluated.
1. Introduction

1.1. Methodology and Evidence Review
The recommendations listed in this document are, whenever possible, evidence based. An extensive review was conducted on literature published through November 2012, and other selected references through October 2013 were reviewed by the guideline writing committee. The relevant data are included in evidence tables in the Data Supplement available online at (http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000000029/-/DC1). Searches were extended to studies, reviews, and other evidence conducted on human subjects and that were published in English from PubMed, EMBASE, Cochrane, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Reports, and other selected databases relevant to this guideline. Key search words included but were not limited to the following: valvular heart disease, aortic stenosis, aortic regurgitation, bicuspid aortic valve, mitral stenosis, mitral regurgitation, tricuspid stenosis, tricuspid regurgitation, pulmonic stenosis, pulmonic regurgitation, prosthetic valves, anticoagulation therapy, infective endocarditis, cardiac surgery, and transcatheter aortic valve replacement. Additionally, the committee reviewed documents related to the subject matter previously published by the ACC and AHA. The references selected and published in this document are representative and not all-inclusive.

1.2. Organization of the Writing Committee
The committee was composed of clinicians, which included cardiologists, interventionalists, surgeons, and anesthesiologists. The committee included representatives from the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, American Society of Echocardiography (ASE), Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, and Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS).

1.3. Document Review and Approval
This document was reviewed by 2 official reviewers each nominated by both the ACC and the AHA, as well as 1 reviewer each from the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, ASE, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, and STS and 39 individual content reviewers (which included representatives from the following ACC committees and councils: Adult Congenital and Pediatric Cardiology Section, Association of International Governors, Council on Clinical Practice, Cardiovascular Section Leadership Council, Geriatric Cardiology Section Leadership Council, Heart Failure and Transplant Council, Interventional Council, Lifelong Learning Oversight Committee, Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease Committee, and Surgeon Council). Reviewers’ RWI information was distributed to the writing committee and is published in this document (Appendix 2).

This document was approved for publication by the governing bodies of the ACC and the AHA and endorsed by the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, ASE, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, and STS.
1.4. Scope of the Guideline
The focus of this guideline is the diagnosis and management of adult patients with valvular heart disease (VHD). A full revision of the original 1998 VHD guideline was made in 2006, and an update was made in 2008 (5). Some recommendations from the earlier VHD guidelines have been updated as warranted by new evidence or a better understanding of earlier evidence, whereas others that were inaccurate, irrelevant, or overlapping were deleted or modified. Throughout, our goal was to provide the clinician with concise, evidence-based, contemporary recommendations and the supporting documentation to encourage their use.

The full-text version of this guideline (4) was created in a different format from prior VHD guidelines to facilitate the access of concise, relevant bytes of information at the point of care when clinical knowledge is needed the most. Thus, each COR is followed by a brief paragraph of supporting text and references. Where applicable, sections were divided into subsections of 1) diagnosis and follow-up, 2) medical therapy, and 3) intervention. The purpose of these subsections was to categorize the COR according to the clinical decision-making pathways that caregivers use in the management of patients with VHD. New recommendations for assessment of the severity of valve lesions have been proposed, based on current natural history studies of patients with VHD. The relevant data are included in evidence tables in the Data Supplement of the full-text guideline (4).

The present document applies to adult patients with VHD. Management of patients with congenital heart disease (CHD) and infants and children with valve disease are not addressed here. The document recommends a combination of lifestyle modifications and medications that constitute GDMT. Both for GDMT and other recommended drug treatment regimens, the reader is advised to confirm dosages with product insert material and to carefully evaluate for contraindications and drug–drug interactions. Table 2 is a list of associated guidelines that may be of interest to the reader. The table is intended for use as a resource and obviates the need to repeat already extant guideline recommendations.

### Table 2. Associated Guidelines and Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Publication Year/Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Evaluation of the Severity of Native Valvular Regurgitation With Two-Dimensional and Doppler Echocardiography</td>
<td>ASE</td>
<td>2003 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for the Management of Patients With Atrial Fibrillation</td>
<td>ACC/AHA/ESC</td>
<td>2006 (7)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for the Management of Adults With Congenital Heart Disease</td>
<td>ACC/AHA</td>
<td>2008 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echocardiographic Assessment of Valve Stenosis: EAE/ASE Recommendations for Clinical Practice</td>
<td>EAE/ASE</td>
<td>2009 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Evaluation of Prosthetic Valves With Echocardiography and Doppler Ultrasound</td>
<td>ASE</td>
<td>2009 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guideline for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy</td>
<td>ACCF/AHA</td>
<td>2011 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines on the Management of Cardiovascular Diseases During Pregnancy</td>
<td>ESC</td>
<td>2011 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antithrombotic and Thrombolytic Therapy for Valvular</td>
<td>ACCP</td>
<td>2012 (13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. General Principles

2.1. Evaluation of the Patient With Suspected VHD

Patients with VHD may present with a heart murmur, symptoms, or incidental findings of valvular abnormalities on chest imaging or noninvasive testing. Irrespective of the presentation, all patients with known or suspected VHD should undergo an initial meticulous history and physical examination, as well as a chest x-ray and electrocardiogram. A comprehensive transthoracic echocardiogram (TTE) with 2-dimensional imaging and Doppler interrogation should then be performed to correlate findings with initial impressions based on the initial clinical evaluation. The TTE will also be able to provide additional information, such as the effect of the valve lesion on the cardiac chambers and great vessels, and to assess for other concomitant valve lesions. Other ancillary testing such as transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), computed tomography (CT) or cardiac magnetic resonance (CMR) imaging, stress testing, and diagnostic hemodynamic cardiac catheterization may be required to determine the optimal treatment for a patient with VHD. An evaluation of the possible surgical risk for each individual patient should be performed if intervention is contemplated, as well as other contributing factors such as the presence and extent of comorbidities and frailty. Follow-up of these patients is important and should consist of an annual history and physical examination in most stable patients. An evaluation of the patient may be necessary sooner than annually if there is a change in the patient’s symptoms. In some valve lesions there may be unpredictable adverse consequences on the left ventricle in the absence of symptoms necessitating more frequent follow-up. The frequency of repeat testing, such as echocardiography, will be dependent on the severity of the valve lesion and its effect on the left or right ventricle, coupled with the known natural history of the valve lesion.

2.2. Definitions of Severity of Valve Disease

Classification of the severity of valve lesions should be based on multiple criteria, including the initial findings on the physical examination, which should then be correlated with data from a comprehensive TTE. Intervention should primarily be performed on patients with severe VHD in addition to other criteria outlined in this document.
This document provides a classification of the progression of VHD with 4 stages (A to D) similar to that proposed by the “2013 ACCF/AHA Guideline for the Management of Heart Failure” (18). Indication for intervention in patients with VHD is dependent on 1) the presence or absence of symptoms; 2) the severity of VHD; 3) the response of the left and/or right ventricle to the volume or pressure overload caused by VHD; 4) the effect on the pulmonary or systemic circulation; and 5) a change in heart rhythm. The stages take into consideration all of these important factors (Table 3). The criteria for the stages of each individual valve lesion are listed in Section 3.1 (Table 6), Section 4.1 (Table 9), Section 6.1 (Table 11), Section 7.1 (Tables 13 and 14), Section 8.1 (Table 17), Section 8.3 (Table 18), and Section 9 (Tables 19 and 20).

Table 3. Stages of Progression of VHD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Patients with risk factors for development of VHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>Patients with progressive VHD (mild-to-moderate severity and asymptomatic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Asymptomatic severe</td>
<td>Asymptomatic patients who have the criteria for severe VHD:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C1: Asymptomatic patients with severe VHD in whom the left or right ventricle remains compensated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C2: Asymptomatic patients with severe VHD, with decompensation of the left or right ventricle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Symptomatic severe</td>
<td>Patients who have developed symptoms as a result of VHD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VHD indicates valvular heart disease.

The purpose of valvular intervention is to improve symptoms and/or prolong survival, as well as to minimize the risk of VHD-related complications such as asymptomatic irreversible ventricular dysfunction, pulmonary hypertension, stroke, and atrial fibrillation (AF). Thus, the criteria for “severe” VHD are based on studies describing the natural history of patients with unoperated VHD, as well as observational studies relating the onset of symptoms to measurements of severity. In patients with stenotic lesions, there is an additional category of “very severe” stenosis based on studies of the natural history showing that prognosis becomes poorer as the severity of stenosis increases.

2.3. Diagnostic Testing—Diagnosis and Follow-Up: Recommendations

See Table 4 for the frequency of echocardiograms in asymptomatic patients with VHD and normal left ventricular function.

Class I

1. TTE is recommended in the initial evaluation of patients with known or suspected VHD to confirm the diagnosis, establish etiology, determine severity, assess hemodynamic consequences, determine prognosis, and evaluate for timing of intervention (19-34). (Level of Evidence: B)
2. TTE is recommended in patients with known VHD with any change in symptoms or physical examination findings. (Level of Evidence: C)
3. Periodic monitoring with TTE is recommended in asymptomatic patients with known VHD at intervals depending on valve lesion, severity, ventricular size, and ventricular function. (Level of Evidence: C)
4. Cardiac catheterization for hemodynamic assessment is recommended in symptomatic patients when noninvasive tests are inconclusive or when there is a discrepancy between the findings on
noninvasive testing and physical examination regarding severity of the valve lesion. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIa

1. Exercise testing is reasonable in selected patients with asymptomatic severe VHD to 1) confirm the absence of symptoms, or 2) assess the hemodynamic response to exercise, or 3) determine prognosis (35-39). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Table 4. Frequency of Echocardiograms in Asymptomatic Patients with VHD and Normal Left Ventricular Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Valve Lesion</th>
<th>Progressive (stage B)</th>
<th>Severe (stage C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aortic Stenosis*</td>
<td>Every 3–5 y (mild severity) V&lt;sub&gt;max&lt;/sub&gt; 2.0–2.9 m/s; every 1–2 y (moderate severity) V&lt;sub&gt;max&lt;/sub&gt; 3.0–3.9 m/s</td>
<td>Every 6–12 mo (V&lt;sub&gt;max&lt;/sub&gt; ≥4 m/s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aortic Regurgitation</td>
<td>Every 3–5 y (mild severity)</td>
<td>Every 6–12 mo (MVA &gt;1.5 cm²) Dilating LV: more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral Stenosis</td>
<td>Every 1–2 y (moderate severity)</td>
<td>Every 1–2 y (MVA 1.0–1.5 cm²) Once every year (MVA &lt;1.0 cm²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral Regurgitation</td>
<td>Every 3–5 y (mild severity)</td>
<td>Every 1–2 y (MVA &gt;1.5 cm²)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patients with mixed valve disease may require serial evaluations at intervals earlier than recommended for single valve lesions.

*With normal stroke volume.

LV indicates left ventricle; MVA, mitral valve area; VHD, valvular heart disease; and V<sub>max</sub>, maximum velocity.

2.4. Basic Principles of Medical Therapy: Recommendations

Class I

1. Secondary prevention of rheumatic fever is indicated in patients with rheumatic heart disease, specifically mitral stenosis (MS) (40). *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIa

1. Prophylaxis against infective endocarditis (IE) is reasonable for the following patients at highest risk for adverse outcomes from IE before dental procedures that involve manipulation of gingival tissue, manipulation of the periapical region of teeth, or perforation of the oral mucosa (41-43), *(Level of Evidence: B)*:
   - Patients with prosthetic cardiac valves;
   - Patients with previous IE;
   - Cardiac transplant recipients with valve regurgitation due to a structurally abnormal valve; or
   - Patients with CHD with:
     - Unrepaired cyanotic CHD, including palliative shunts and conduits;
     - Completely repaired congenital heart defect repaired with prosthetic material or device, whether placed by surgery or catheter intervention, during the first 6 months after the procedure; or
     - Repaired CHD with residual defects at the site or adjacent to the site of a prosthetic patch or prosthetic device.

Class III: No Benefit
Nishimura, RA et al.  
2014 AHA/ACC Valvular Heart Disease Guideline

1. Prophylaxis against IE is not recommended in patients with VHD who are at risk of IE for nondental procedures (e.g., TEE, esophagogastroduodenoscopy, colonoscopy, or cystoscopy) in the absence of active infection (44). (Level of Evidence: B)

2.5. Evaluation of Surgical and Interventional Risk
See Table 5 for risk assessment combining STS risk estimate, frailty, major organ system dysfunction, and procedure-specific impediments.

Table 5. Risk Assessment Combining STS Risk Estimate, Frailty, Major Organ System Dysfunction, and Procedure-Specific Impediments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Risk (Must Meet ALL Criteria in This Column)</th>
<th>Intermediate Risk (Any 1 Criterion in This Column)</th>
<th>High Risk (Any 1 Criterion in This Column)</th>
<th>Prohibitive Risk (Any 1 Criterion in This Column)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STS PROM* &lt;4% AND 4% to 8% OR &gt;8% OR</td>
<td>Predicted risk with surgery of death or major morbidity (all-cause) &gt;50% at 1 y OR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frailty† None AND 1 Index (mild) OR ≥2 Indices (moderate to severe) OR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major organ system compromise not to be improved postoperatively‡ None AND 1 Organ system OR No more than 2 organ systems OR ≥3 Organ systems OR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure-specific impediment§ None Possible procedure-specific impediment Possible procedure-specific impediment Severe procedure-specific impediment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Use of the STS PROM to predict risk in a given institution with reasonable reliability is appropriate only if institutional outcomes are within 1 standard deviation of STS average observed/expected ratio for the procedure in question.
†Seven frailty indices: Katz Activities of Daily Living (independence in feeding, bathing, dressing, transferring, toileting, and urinary continence) and independence in ambulation (no walking aid or assist required or 5-meter walk in <6 s). Other scoring systems can be applied to calculate no, mild-, or moderate-to-severe frailty.
‡Examples of major organ system compromise: Cardiac—severe LV systolic or diastolic dysfunction or RV dysfunction, fixed pulmonary hypertension; CKD stage 3 or worse; pulmonary dysfunction with FEV1 <50% or DLCO₂ <50% of predicted; CNS dysfunction (dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, CVA with persistent physical limitation); GI dysfunction—Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, nutritional impairment, or serum albumin <3.0; cancer—active malignancy; and liver—any history of cirrhosis, variceal bleeding, or elevated INR in the absence of VKA therapy.
§Examples: tracheostomy present, heavily calcified ascending aorta, chest malformation, arterial coronary graft adherent to posterior chest wall, or radiation damage.

CKD indicates chronic kidney disease; CNS, central nervous system; CVA, stroke; DLCO₂, diffusion capacity for carbon dioxide; FEV1, forced expiratory volume in 1 s; GI, gastrointestinal; INR, international normalized ratio; LV, left ventricular; PROM, predicted risk of mortality; RV, right ventricular; STS, Society of Thoracic Surgeons; and VKA, vitamin K antagonist.

2.6. The Heart Valve Team and Heart Valve Centers of Excellence: Recommendations

Class I
1. Patients with severe VHD should be evaluated by a multidisciplinary Heart Valve Team when intervention is considered. (Level of Evidence: C)

Class IIa
1. Consultation with or referral to a Heart Valve Center of Excellence is reasonable when discussing treatment options for 1) asymptomatic patients with severe VHD, 2) patients who may benefit from valve repair versus valve replacement, or 3) patients with multiple comorbidities for whom valve intervention is considered. (*Level of Evidence: C*)

A competent, practicing cardiologist should have the ability to diagnose and direct the treatment of most patients with VHD. For instance, otherwise healthy patients with severe VHD who become symptomatic should nearly always be considered for intervention. However, more complex decision-making processes may be required in select patient populations, such as those who have asymptomatic severe VHD, those who are at high risk for intervention, or those who could benefit from specialized therapies such as valve repair or transcatheter valve intervention.

The management of patients with complex severe VHD is best achieved by a Heart Valve Team composed primarily of a cardiologist and surgeon (including a structural valve interventionist if a catheter-based therapy is being considered). In selected cases, there may be a multidisciplinary, collaborative group of caregivers, including cardiologists, structural valve interventionalists, cardiovascular imaging specialists, cardiovascular surgeons, anesthesiologists, and nurses, all of whom have expertise in the management and outcomes of patients with complex VHD. The Heart Valve Team should optimize patient selection for available procedures through a comprehensive understanding of the risk–benefit ratio of different treatment strategies. This is particularly beneficial in patients in whom there are several options for treatment, such as the elderly high-risk patient with severe symptomatic aortic stenosis (AS) being considered for transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) or surgical aortic valve replacement (AVR). The patient and family should be sufficiently educated by the Heart Valve Team about all alternatives for treatment so that their expectations can be met as fully as possible using a shared decision-making approach.

The optimal care of the patient with complex heart disease is best performed in centers that can provide all available options for diagnosis and management, including the expertise for complex aortic or mitral valve repair, aortic surgery, and transcatheter therapies. This has led to the development of Heart Valve Centers of Excellence. Heart Valve Centers of Excellence 1) are composed of experienced healthcare providers with expertise from multiple disciplines; 2) offer all available options for diagnosis and management, including complex valve repair, aortic surgery, and transcatheter therapies; 3) participate in regional or national outcome registries; 4) demonstrate adherence to national guidelines; 5) participate in continued evaluation and quality improvement processes to enhance patient outcomes; and 6) publicly report their available mortality and success rates. Decisions about intervention at the Heart Valve Centers of Excellence should be dependent on the centers’ publicly available mortality rates and operative outcomes. It is recognized that some Heart Valve Centers of Excellence may have expertise in select valve problems.
3. Aortic Stenosis: Recommendations

See Table 6 for the stages of valvular AS; Tables 7 and 8 for a summary of recommendations for choice and timing of intervention; and Figure 1 for indications for AVR in patients with AS.

3.1. Stages of Valvular AS

Medical and interventional approaches to the management of patients with valvular AS depend on accurate diagnosis of the cause and stage of the disease process. Table 6 shows the stages of AS ranging from patients at risk of AS (stage A) or with progressive hemodynamic obstruction (stage B) to severe asymptomatic (stage C) and symptomatic AS (stage D). Each of these stages is defined by valve anatomy, valve hemodynamics, the consequences of valve obstruction on the left ventricle and vasculature, as well as by patient symptoms.

Hemodynamic severity is best characterized by the transaortic maximum velocity (or mean pressure gradient) when the transaortic volume flow rate is normal. However, some patients with AS have a low transaortic volume flow rate due to either left ventricular (LV) systolic dysfunction with a low left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF) or due to a small hypertrophied left ventricle with a low stroke volume. These categories of severe AS pose a diagnostic and management challenge distinctly different from the majority of patients with AS who have a high gradient and velocity when AS is severe. These special subgroups with low-flow AS are designated D2 (with a low LVEF) and D3 (with a normal LVEF).

The definition of severe AS is based on natural history studies of patients with unoperated AS, which show that the prognosis is poor once there is a peak aortic valve velocity of >4.0 m per second, corresponding to a mean aortic valve gradient >40 mm Hg. In patients with low forward flow, severe AS can be present with lower aortic valve velocities and lower aortic valve gradients. Thus, an aortic valve area should be calculated in these patients. The prognosis of patients with AS is poorer when the aortic valve area is <1.0 cm². At normal flow rates, an aortic valve area of <0.8 cm² correlates with a mean aortic valve gradient >40 mm Hg. However, symptomatic patients with a calcified aortic valve with reduced opening and an aortic valve area between 0.8 cm² and 1.0 cm² should be closely evaluated to determine whether they would benefit from valve intervention.

Meticulous attention to detail is required when assessing aortic valve hemodynamics, either with Doppler echocardiography or cardiac catheterization, and the inherent variability of the measurements and calculations should always be considered in clinical-decision making.
# Table 6. Stages of Valvular AS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valve Anatomy</th>
<th>Valve Hemodynamics</th>
<th>Hemodynamic Consequences</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>At risk of AS</td>
<td>• Bicuspid aortic valve (or other congenital valve anomaly)</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} &lt; 2 \text{ m/s}$</td>
<td>• None</td>
<td>• None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Aortic valve sclerosis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Progressive AS</td>
<td>• Mild-to-moderate leaflet calcification of a bicuspid or trileaflet valve with some reduction in systolic motion or</td>
<td>• Mild AS: Aortic $V_{\text{max}} 2.0–2.9 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P &lt; 20 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>Early LV diastolic dysfunction may be present</td>
<td>• None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rheumatic valve changes with commissural fusion</td>
<td>• Moderate AS: Aortic $V_{\text{max}} 3.0–3.9 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P 20–39 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• Normal LVEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Asymptomatic severe AS</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification or congenital stenosis with severely reduced leaflet opening</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• LV diastolic dysfunction</td>
<td>None: Exercise testing is reasonable to confirm symptom status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Asymptomatic severe AS</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification or congenital stenosis with severely reduced leaflet opening</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• Mild LV hypertrophy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• AVA typically $\leq 1.0 \text{ cm}^2$ (or AVAi $\leq 0.6 \text{ cm}^2/\text{m}^2$)</td>
<td>• Normal LVEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Very severe AS is an aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 5 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 60 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Asymptomatic severe AS with LV dysfunction</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification or congenital stenosis with severely reduced leaflet opening</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>LVEF $&lt; 50%$</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Symptomatic severe AS</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification or congenital stenosis with severely reduced leaflet opening</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• LV diastolic dysfunction</td>
<td>Exertional dyspnea or decreased exercise tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Symptomatic severe high-gradient AS</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification or congenital stenosis with severely reduced leaflet opening</td>
<td>• Aortic $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P \geq 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• LV hypertrophy</td>
<td>Exertional angina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• AVA typically $\leq 1.0 \text{ cm}^2$ (or AVAi $\leq 0.6 \text{ cm}^2/\text{m}^2$) but may be larger with mixed AS/AR</td>
<td>• Pulmonary hypertension may be present</td>
<td>Exertional syncope or presyncope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>Symptomatic severe low-flow/low-gradient AS with reduced LVEF</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification with severely reduced leaflet motion</td>
<td>• AVA $\leq 1.0 \text{ cm}^2$ with resting aortic $V_{\text{max}} &lt; 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P &lt; 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>• LV diastolic dysfunction</td>
<td>HF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dobutamine stress echocardiography shows AVA $\leq 1.0 \text{ cm}^2$ with $V_{\text{max}} \geq 4 \text{ m/s}$ at any</td>
<td>• LV hypertrophy</td>
<td>Angina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flow rate</td>
<td>• LVEF $&lt; 50%$</td>
<td>Syncope or presyncope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3</td>
<td>Symptomatic severe low-gradient</td>
<td>• Severe leaflet calcification</td>
<td>• AVA $\leq 1.0 \text{ cm}^2$ with aortic $V_{\text{max}} &lt; 4 \text{ m/s}$ or mean $\Delta P &lt; 40 \text{ mm Hg}$</td>
<td>Increased LV</td>
<td>HF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS with normal LVEF or paradoxical low-flow severe AS</td>
<td>with severely reduced leaflet motion</td>
<td>mean $\Delta P &lt; 40$ mm Hg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indexed AVA $\leq 0.6$ cm$^2$/m$^2$ and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stroke volume index $&lt; 35$ mL/m$^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Measured when patient is normotensive (systolic BP $&lt; 140$ mm Hg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative wall thickness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Small LV chamber with low stroke volume</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restrictive diastolic filling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LVEF $\geq 50%$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AR indicates aortic regurgitation; AS, aortic stenosis; AVA, aortic valve area; AVAi, aortic valve area indexed to body surface area; BP, blood pressure; HF, heart failure; LV, left ventricular; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; $\Delta P$, pressure gradient; and $V_{\text{max}}$, maximum aortic velocity.
3.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up
The overall approach to the initial diagnosis of VHD is discussed in Section 2.3, and additional considerations specific to patients with AS are addressed here.

Class I
1. TTE is indicated in patients with signs or symptoms of AS or a bicuspid aortic valve for accurate diagnosis of the cause of AS, hemodynamic severity, LV size and systolic function, and for determining prognosis and timing of valve intervention (26, 27, 45). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class IIa
1. Low-dose dobutamine stress testing using echocardiographic or invasive hemodynamic measurements is reasonable in patients with stage D2 AS with all of the following (46-48), *(Level of Evidence: B)*:
   a. Calcified aortic valve with reduced systolic opening;
   b. LVEF less than 50%;
   c. Calculated valve area 1.0 cm² or less; and
   d. Aortic velocity less than 4.0 m per second or mean pressure gradient less than 40 mm Hg.
2. Exercise testing is reasonable to assess physiological changes with exercise and to confirm the absence of symptoms in asymptomatic patients with a calcified aortic valve and an aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher (stage C) (27, 37, 38, 49). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class III: Harm
1. Exercise testing should not be performed in symptomatic patients with AS when the aortic velocity is 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient is 40 mm Hg or higher (stage D) (50). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3.3. Medical Therapy

Class I
1. Hypertension in patients at risk for developing AS (stage A) and in patients with asymptomatic AS (stages B and C) should be treated according to standard GDMT, started at a low dose, and gradually titrated upward as needed with frequent clinical monitoring (51-53). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class IIb
1. Vasodilator therapy may be reasonable if used with invasive hemodynamic monitoring in the acute management of patients with severe decompensated AS (stage D) with New York Heart Association (NYHA) class IV heart failure (HF) symptoms. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class III: No Benefit
1. Statin therapy is not indicated for prevention of hemodynamic progression of AS in patients with mild-to-moderate calcific valve disease (stages B to D) (54-56). *(Level of Evidence: A)*

3.4. Timing of Intervention
See Table 7 for a summary of recommendations from this section.

Class I
1. AVR is recommended in symptomatic patients with severe AS (stage D1) with (57-60), (Level of Evidence: B):
   a. Decreased systolic opening of a calcified or congenitally stenotic aortic valve; and
   b. An aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher; and
   c. Symptoms of HF, syncope, exertional dyspnea, angina, or presyncope by history or on exercise testing.

2. AVR is recommended for asymptomatic patients with severe AS (stage C2) and an LVEF less than 50% with decreased systolic opening of a calcified aortic valve with an aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher (61, 62). (Level of Evidence: B)

3. AVR is indicated for patients with severe AS (stage C or D) when undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications when there is decreased systolic opening of a calcified aortic valve and an aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher (63, 64). (Level of Evidence: B)

Class IIa
1. AVR is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with very severe AS (stage C1) with (65, 66), (Level of Evidence: B):
   a. Decreased systolic opening of a calcified valve;
   b. An aortic velocity 5.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 60 mm Hg or higher; and
   c. A low surgical risk.

2. AVR is reasonable in apparently asymptomatic patients with severe AS (stage C1) with (27, 38), (Level of Evidence: B):
   a. A calcified aortic valve;
   b. An aortic velocity of 4.0 m per second to 4.9 m per second or mean pressure gradient of 40 mm Hg to 59 mm Hg; and
   c. An exercise test demonstrating decreased exercise tolerance or a fall in systolic blood pressure (BP).

3. AVR is reasonable in symptomatic patients with low-flow/low-gradient severe AS with reduced LVEF (stage D2) with a (67-69), (Level of Evidence: B):
   a. Calcified aortic valve with reduced systolic opening;
   b. Resting valve area 1.0 cm$^2$ or less;
   c. Aortic velocity less than 4.0 m per second or mean pressure gradient less than 40 mm Hg;
   d. LVEF less than 50%; and
   e. A low-dose dobutamine stress study that shows an aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher with a valve area 1.0 cm$^2$ or less at any dobutamine dose.

4. AVR is reasonable in symptomatic patients with low-flow/low-gradient severe AS (stage D3) with an LVEF 50% or greater, a calcified aortic valve with significantly reduced leaflet motion, and a valve area 1.0 cm$^2$ or less only if clinical, hemodynamic, and anatomic data support valve obstruction as the most likely cause of symptoms and data recorded when the patient is normotensive (systolic BP <140 mm Hg) indicate (Level of Evidence: C):
   a. An aortic velocity less than 4.0 m per second or mean pressure gradient less than 40 mm Hg; and
   b. A stroke volume index less than 35 mL/m$^2$; and
   c. An indexed valve area 0.6 cm$^2$/m$^2$ or less.

5. AVR is reasonable for patients with moderate AS (stage B) with an aortic velocity between 3.0 m per second and 3.9 m per second or mean pressure gradient between 20 mm Hg and 39 mm Hg who are undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications. (Level of Evidence: C)
Class IIb

1. AVR may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe AS (stage C1) with an aortic velocity 4.0 m per second or greater or mean pressure gradient 40 mm Hg or higher if the patient is at low surgical risk and serial testing shows an increase in aortic velocity 0.3 m/s or greater per year. (Level of Evidence: C)

Table 7. Summary of Recommendations for AS: Timing of Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVR is recommended with severe high-gradient AS who have symptoms by history or on exercise testing (stage D1)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(10, 57-59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is recommended for asymptomatic patients with severe AS (stage C2) and LVEF &lt;50%</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(61, 62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is indicated for patients with severe AS (stage C or D) when undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(63, 64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with very severe AS (stage C1, aortic velocity (\geq 5.0) m/s) and low surgical risk</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(65, 66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable in asymptomatic patients (stage C1) with severe AS and decreased exercise tolerance or an exercise fall in BP</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(27, 38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable in symptomatic patients with low-flow/low-gradient severe AS with reduced LVEF (stage D2) with a low-dose dobutamine stress study that shows an aortic velocity (\geq 4.0) m/s (or mean pressure gradient (\geq 40) mm Hg) with a valve area (\leq 1.0) cm(^2) at any dobutamine dose</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(67-69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable in symptomatic patients who have low-flow/low-gradient severe AS (stage D3) who are normotensive and have an LVEF (\geq 50)% if clinical, hemodynamic, and anatomic data support valve obstruction as the most likely cause of symptoms</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable for patients with moderate AS (stage B) (aortic velocity 3.0–3.9 m/s) who are undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe AS (stage C1) and rapid disease progression and low surgical risk</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AS indicates aortic stenosis; AVR, aortic valve replacement by either surgical or transcatheter approach; BP, blood pressure; COR, Class of Recommendation; LOE, Level of Evidence; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; and N/A, not applicable.

Figure 1. Indications for AVR in Patients With AS
Arrows show the decision pathways that result in a recommendation for AVR. Periodic monitoring is indicated for all patients in whom AVR is not yet indicated, including those with asymptomatic AS (stage D or C) and those with low-gradient AS (stage D2 or D3) who do not meet the criteria for intervention.

*AVR should be considered with stage D3 AS only if valve obstruction is the most likely cause of symptoms, stroke volume index is <35 mL/m², indexed AVA is ≤0.6 cm²/m², and data are recorded when the patient is normotensive (systolic BP <140 mm Hg).

AS indicates aortic stenosis; AVA; aortic valve area; AVR, aortic valve replacement by either surgical or transcatheter approach; BP, blood pressure; DSE, dobutamine stress echocardiography; ETT, exercise treadmill test; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; ΔPmean, mean pressure gradient; and Vmax, maximum velocity.

### 3.5. Choice of Intervention

See Table 8 for a summary of recommendations from this section.

#### Class I
1. Surgical AVR is recommended in patients who meet an indication for AVR (Section 3.4) with low or intermediate surgical risk (Section 2.5 in the full-text guideline) (70, 71). (*Level of Evidence: A*)
2. For patients in whom TAVR or high-risk surgical AVR is being considered, a Heart Valve Team consisting of an integrated, multidisciplinary group of healthcare professionals with expertise in VHD, cardiac imaging, interventional cardiology, cardiac anesthesia, and cardiac surgery should collaborate to provide optimal patient care. (*Level of Evidence: C*)
3. TAVR is recommended in patients who meet an indication for AVR (Section 3.4) who have a prohibitive risk for surgical AVR (Section 2.5 in the full-text guideline) and a predicted post-TAVR survival greater than 12 months (72, 73). (Level of Evidence: B)

Class IIa
1. TAVR is a reasonable alternative to surgical AVR in patients who meet an indication for AVR (Section 3.4) and who have high surgical risk for surgical AVR (Section 2.5 in the full-text guideline) (74, 75). (Level of Evidence: B)

Class IIb
1. Percutaneous aortic balloon dilation may be considered as a bridge to surgical AVR or TAVR in patients with severe symptomatic AS. (Level of Evidence: C)

Class III: No Benefit
1. TAVR is not recommended in patients in whom existing comorbidities would preclude the expected benefit from correction of AS (72). (Level of Evidence: B)

Table 8. Summary of Recommendations for AS: Choice of Surgical or Transcatheter Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surgical AVR is recommended in patients who meet an indication for AVR (Section 3.4) with low or intermediate surgical risk (Section 2.5 in the full-text guideline)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>(70, 71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For patients in whom TAVR or high-risk surgical AVR is being considered, members of a Heart Valve Team should collaborate to provide optimal patient care</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAVR is recommended in patients who meet an indication for AVR for AS who have a prohibitive surgical risk and a predicted post-TAVR survival &gt;12 mo</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(72, 73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAVR is a reasonable alternative to surgical AVR in patients who meet an indication for AVR (Section 3.4) and who have high surgical risk (Section 2.5 in the full-text guideline)</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(74, 75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percutaneous aortic balloon dilation may be considered as a bridge to surgical or transcatheter AVR in severely symptomatic patients with severe AS</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAVR is not recommended in patients in whom existing comorbidities would preclude the expected benefit from correction of AS</td>
<td>III: No Benefit</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(72)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AS indicates aortic stenosis; AVR, aortic valve replacement; COR, Class of Recommendation; LOE, Level of Evidence; N/A, not applicable; and TAVR, transcatheter aortic valve replacement.

4. Aortic Regurgitation: Recommendations

4.1. Stages of Chronic Aortic Regurgitation

The most common causes of chronic aortic regurgitation (AR) in the United States and other developed countries are bicuspid aortic valve and calcific valve disease. In addition, AR frequently arises from primary diseases causing dilation of the ascending aorta or the sinuses of Valsalva. Another cause of AR is rheumatic heart disease (the leading cause in many developing countries). In the majority of patients with AR, the disease course is chronic and slowly progressive with increasing LV volume overload and LV adaptation via chamber dilation and hypertrophy. Management of patients with AR depends on accurate diagnosis of the cause and stage
of the disease process. Table 9 shows the stages of AR ranging from patients at risk of AR (stage A) or with progressive mild-to-moderate AR (stage B) to severe asymptomatic (stage C) and symptomatic AR (stage D). Each of these stages is defined by valve anatomy, valve hemodynamics, severity of LV dilation, and LV systolic function, as well as by patient symptoms.
### Table 9. Stages of Chronic AR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valve Anatomy</th>
<th>Valve Hemodynamics</th>
<th>Hemodynamic Consequences</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A     | At risk of AR | • Bicuspid aortic valve (or other congenital valve anomaly)  
• Aortic valve sclerosis  
• Diseases of the aortic sinuses or ascending aorta  
• History of rheumatic fever or known rheumatic heart disease  
• IE | • AR severity: none or trace | • None | • None |
| B     | Progressive AR | • Mild-to-moderate calcification of a trileaflet bicuspid aortic valve (or other congenital valve anomaly)  
• Dilated aortic sinuses  
• Rheumatic valve changes  
• Previous IE | • **Mild AR:**  
  o Jet width <25% of LVOT;  
  o Vena contracta <0.3 cm;  
  o RVol <30 mL/beat;  
  o RF <30%;  
  o ERO <0.10 cm²;  
  o Angiography grade 1+  
  • **Moderate AR:**  
    o Jet width 25%–64% of LVOT;  
    o Vena contracta 0.3–0.6 cm;  
    o RVol 30–59 mL/beat;  
    o RF 30%–49%;  
    o ERO 0.10–0.29 cm²;  
    o Angiography grade 2+ | • Normal LV systolic function  
• Normal LV volume or mild LV dilation | • None |
| C     | Asymptomatic severe AR | • Calcific aortic valve disease  
• Bicuspid valve (or other congenital abnormality)  
• Dilated aortic sinuses or ascending aorta  
• Rheumatic valve changes  
• IE with abnormal leaflet closure or perforation | • **Severe AR:**  
  o Jet width ≥65% of LVOT;  
  o Vena contracta >0.6 cm;  
  o Holodiastolic flow reversal in the proximal abdominal aorta  
  o RVol ≥60 mL/beat;  
  o RF ≥50%;  
  o ERO ≥0.3 cm²;  
  o Angiography grade 3+ to 4+;  
  o In addition, diagnosis of chronic severe AR requires evidence of LV dilation | C1: Normal LVEF (≥50%) and mild-to-moderate LV dilation (LVESD ≤50 mm)  
C2: Abnormal LV systolic function with depressed LVEF (<50%) or severe LV dilatation (LVESD >50 mm or indexed LVESD >25 mm²) | • None; exercise testing is reasonable to confirm symptom status |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptomatic severe AR</th>
<th>Severe AR:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Calcific valve disease</td>
<td>• Doppler jet width ≥65% of LVOT;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bicuspid valve (or other congenital abnormality)</td>
<td>• Vena contracta &gt;0.6 cm,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dilated aortic sinuses or ascending aorta</td>
<td>• Holodiastolic flow reversal in the proximal abdominal aorta,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rheumatic valve changes</td>
<td>• RVol ≥60 mL/beat;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Previous IE with abnormal leaflet closure or perforation</td>
<td>• RF ≥50%;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ERO ≥0.3 cm²;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Angiography grade 3+ to 4+;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In addition, diagnosis of chronic severe AR requires evidence of LV dilation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AR indicates aortic regurgitation; ERO, effective regurgitant orifice; HF, heart failure; IE, infective endocarditis; LV, left ventricular; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; LVESD, left ventricular end-systolic dimension; LVOT, left ventricular outflow tract; RF, regurgitant fraction; and RVol, regurgitant volume.

Symptomatic severe AR may occur with normal systolic function (LVEF ≥50%), mild-to-moderate LV dysfunction (LVEF 40% to 50%), or severe LV dysfunction (LVEF <40%);

• Moderate-to-severe LV dilation is present.

Exertional dyspnea or angina or more severe HF symptoms.
4.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up

Class I
1. TTE is indicated in patients with signs or symptoms of AR (stages A to D) for accurate diagnosis of the cause of regurgitation, regurgitant severity, and LV size and systolic function, and for determining clinical outcome and timing of valve intervention (34, 76-85). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. TTE is indicated in patients with dilated aortic sinuses or ascending aorta or with a bicuspid aortic valve (stages A and B) to evaluate the presence and severity of AR (86). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. CMR is indicated in patients with moderate or severe AR (stages B, C, and D) and suboptimal echocardiographic images for the assessment of LV systolic function, systolic and diastolic volumes, and measurement of AR severity (87, 88). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

4.3. Medical Therapy

Class I
1. Treatment of hypertension (systolic BP >140 mm Hg) is recommended in patients with chronic AR (stages B and C), preferably with dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers or angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors/angiotensin-receptor blockers (ARBs) (84, 89). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class IIa
1. Medical therapy with ACE inhibitors/ARBs and beta blockers is reasonable in patients with severe AR who have symptoms and/or LV dysfunction (stages C2 and D) when surgery is not performed because of comorbidities (90, 91). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

4.4. Timing of Intervention

See Table 10 for a summary of recommendations from this section.

Class I
1. AVR is indicated for symptomatic patients with severe AR regardless of LV systolic function (stage D) (33, 92, 93). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. AVR is indicated for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe AR and LV systolic dysfunction (LVEF <50%) at rest (stage C2) if no other cause for systolic dysfunction is identified (92, 94-96). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. AVR is indicated for patients with severe AR (stage C or D) while undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIa
1. AVR is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with severe AR with normal LV systolic function (LVEF ≥50%) but with severe LV dilation (LV end-systolic dimension [LVESD] >50 mm or indexed LVESD >25 mm/m²) (stage C2) (97-99). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. AVR is reasonable in patients with moderate AR (stage B) while undergoing surgery on the ascending aorta, coronary artery bypass graft (CABG), or mitral valve surgery. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIb
1. AVR may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe AR and normal LV systolic function at rest (LVEF ≥50%, stage C1) but with progressive severe LV dilatation (LV end-diastolic dimension >65 mm) if surgical risk is low. *(Level of Evidence: C)*
Table 10. Summary of Recommendations for AR Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVR is indicated for symptomatic patients with severe AR regardless of LV systolic function (stage D)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(33, 92, 93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is indicated for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe AR and LV systolic dysfunction (LVEF &lt;50%) (stage C2)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(92, 94-96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is indicated for patients with severe AR (stage C or D) while undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with severe AR with normal LV systolic function (LVEF ≥50%) but with severe LV dilation (LVESD ≥50 mm, stage C2)</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(97-99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR is reasonable in patients with moderate AR (stage B) who are undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVR may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe AR and normal LV systolic function (LVEF ≥50%, stage C1) but with progressive severe LV dilation (LVEDD &gt;65 mm) if surgical risk is low*</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Particularly in the setting of progressive LV enlargement.

AR indicates aortic regurgitation; AVR, aortic valve replacement; COR, Class of Recommendation; LOE, Level of Evidence; LV, left ventricular; LVEDD, left ventricular end-diastolic dimension; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; LVESD, left ventricular end-systolic dimension; and N/A, not applicable.

Figure 2. Indications for AVR for Chronic AR
ventricular ejection fraction; LVESD, left ventricular end-systolic dimension; RF, regurgitant fraction; and RVol, regurgitant volume.

5. Bicuspid Aortic Valve and Aortopathy: Recommendations

5.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up

Class I

1. An initial TTE is indicated in patients with a known bicuspid aortic valve to evaluate valve morphology, to measure the severity of AS and AR, and to assess the shape and diameter of the aortic sinuses and ascending aorta for prediction of clinical outcome and to determine timing of intervention (100-105). (Level of Evidence: B)

2. Aortic magnetic resonance angiography or CT angiography is indicated in patients with a bicuspid aortic valve when morphology of the aortic sinuses, sinotubular junction, or ascending aorta cannot be assessed accurately or fully by echocardiography. (Level of Evidence: C)

3. Serial evaluation of the size and morphology of the aortic sinuses and ascending aorta by echocardiography, CMR, or CT angiography is recommended in patients with a bicuspid aortic valve and an aortic diameter greater than 4.0 cm, with the examination interval determined by the degree and rate of progression of aortic dilation and by family history. In patients with an aortic diameter greater than 4.5 cm, this evaluation should be performed annually. (Level of Evidence: C)

5.2. Intervention

Class I

1. Operative intervention to repair the aortic sinuses or replace the ascending aorta is indicated in patients with a bicuspid aortic valve if the diameter of the aortic sinuses or ascending aorta is greater than 5.5 cm (106-108). (Level of Evidence: B)

Class IIa

1. Operative intervention to repair the aortic sinuses or replace the ascending aorta is reasonable in patients with bicuspid aortic valves if the diameter of the aortic sinuses or ascending aorta is greater than 5.0 cm and a risk factor for dissection is present (family history of aortic dissection or if the rate of increase in diameter is ≥0.5 cm per year). (Level of Evidence: C)

2. Replacement of the ascending aorta is reasonable in patients with a bicuspid aortic valve who are undergoing aortic valve surgery because of severe AS or AR (Sections 3.4 and 4.4) if the diameter of the ascending aorta is greater than 4.5 cm. (Level of Evidence: C)

6. Mitral Stenosis: Recommendations

6.1. Stages of MS

Medical and interventional approaches to the management of patients with valvular MS depend on accurate diagnosis of the cause and stage of the disease process. Table 11 shows the stages of mitral valve disease ranging from patients at risk of MS (stage A) or with progressive hemodynamic obstruction (stage B) to severe asymptomatic (stage C) and symptomatic MS (stage D). Each of these stages is defined by valve anatomy, valve hemodynamics, the consequences of valve obstruction on the left atrium (LA) and pulmonary circulation, and patient symptoms. The anatomic features of the stages of MS are based on a rheumatic etiology for the disease. There are patients who have a nonrheumatic etiology of MS due to senile calcific disease (Section 6.3 in the full...
text) in whom there is a heavily calcified mitral annulus with extension of the calcium into the leaflets. Hemodynamic severity is best characterized by the planimetered mitral valve area and the calculated mitral valve area from the diastolic pressure half-time. The definition of “severe” MS is based on the severity at which symptoms occur as well as the severity at which intervention will improve symptoms. Thus, a mitral valve area ≤1.5 cm² is considered severe. This usually corresponds to a transmitral mean gradient of >5 mm Hg to 10 mm Hg at a normal heart rate. However, the mean pressure gradient is highly dependent on the transvalvular flow and diastolic filling period and will vary greatly with changes in heart rate. The diastolic pressure half-time is dependent not only on the degree of mitral obstruction but also the compliance of the left ventricle and LA and other measures of mitral valve area, such as the continuity equation or the proximal isovelocity surface area, may be used if discrepancies exist (109-115).
### Table 11. Stages of MS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valve Anatomy</th>
<th>Valve Hemodynamics</th>
<th>Hemodynamic Consequences</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>At risk of MS</td>
<td>- Mild valve doming during diastole</td>
<td>Normal transmitral flow velocity</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| B     | Progressive MS | - Rheumatic valve changes with commissural fusion and diastolic doming of the mitral valve leaflets  
- Planimetered MVA >1.5 cm² | - Increased transmitral flow velocities  
- MVA >1.5 cm²  
- Diastolic pressure half-time <150 ms | - Mild-to-moderate LA enlargement  
- Normal pulmonary pressure at rest | None |
| C     | Asymptomatic severe MS | - Rheumatic valve changes with commissural fusion and diastolic doming of the mitral valve leaflets  
- Planimetered MVA ≤1.5 cm²  
- (MVA ≤1.0 cm² with very severe MS) | - MVA ≤1.5 cm²  
- (MVA ≤1.0 cm² with very severe MS)  
- Diastolic pressure half-time ≥150 ms  
- (Diastolic pressure half-time ≥220 ms with very severe MS) | - Severe LA enlargement  
- Elevated PASP >30 mm Hg | None |
| D     | Symptomatic severe MS | - Rheumatic valve changes with commissural fusion and diastolic doming of the mitral valve leaflets  
- Planimetered MVA ≤1.5 cm² | - MVA ≤1.5 cm²  
- (MVA ≤1.0 cm² with very severe MS)  
- Diastolic pressure half-time ≥150 ms  
- (Diastolic pressure half-time ≥220 ms with very severe MS) | - Severe LA enlargement  
- Elevated PASP >30 mm Hg | - Decreased exercise tolerance  
- Exertional dyspnea |

The transmitral mean pressure gradient should be obtained to further determine the hemodynamic effect of the MS and is usually >5 mm Hg to 10 mm Hg in severe MS; however, due to the variability of the mean pressure gradient with heart rate and forward flow, it has not been included in the criteria for severity.

LA indicates left atrial; LV, left ventricular; MS, mitral stenosis; MVA, mitral valve area; and PASP, pulmonary artery systolic pressure.
See Figure 3 for indications for intervention for rheumatic MS.

6.2. Diagnosis and Follow-Up

Class I
1. TTE is indicated in patients with signs or symptoms of MS to establish the diagnosis, quantify hemodynamic severity (mean pressure gradient, mitral valve area, and pulmonary artery pressure), assess concomitant valvular lesions, and demonstrate valve morphology (to determine suitability for mitral commissurotomy) (9, 60, 116-123). (Level of Evidence: B)
2. TEE should be performed in patients considered for percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy to assess the presence or absence of left atrial thrombus and to further evaluate the severity of mitral regurgitation (MR) (117, 124-126). (Level of Evidence: B)
3. Exercise testing with Doppler or invasive hemodynamic assessment is recommended to evaluate the response of the mean mitral gradient and pulmonary artery pressure in patients with MS when there is a discrepancy between resting Doppler echocardiographic findings and clinical symptoms or signs. (Level of Evidence: C)

6.3. Medical Therapy

Class I
1. Anticoagulation (vitamin K antagonist [VKA] or heparin) is indicated in patients with 1) MS and AF (paroxysmal, persistent, or permanent), or 2) MS and a prior embolic event, or 3) MS and a left atrial thrombus (127-133). (Level of Evidence: B)

Class IIa
1. Heart rate control can be beneficial in patients with MS and AF and fast ventricular response. (Level of Evidence: C)

Class IIb
1. Heart rate control may be considered for patients with MS in normal sinus rhythm and symptoms associated with exercise (134, 135). (Level of Evidence: B)

6.4. Intervention

See Table 12 for a summary of recommendations from this section.

Class I
1. Percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy is recommended for symptomatic patients with severe MS (mitral valve area $\leq 1.5$ cm$^2$, stage D) and favorable valve morphology in the absence of left atrial thrombus or moderate-to-severe MR (109-113, 115, 136). (Level of Evidence: A)
2. Mitral valve surgery (repair, commissurotomy, or valve replacement) is indicated in severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III to IV) with severe MS (mitral valve area $\leq 1.5$ cm$^2$, stage D) who are not high risk for surgery and who are not candidates for or who have failed previous percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy (137-142). (Level of Evidence: B)
3. Concomitant mitral valve surgery is indicated for patients with severe MS (mitral valve area $\leq 1.5$ cm$^2$, stage C or D) undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications. (Level of Evidence: C)

Class IIa
1. Percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with very severe MS (mitral valve area $\leq 1.0$ cm$^2$, stage C) and favorable valve morphology in the absence of left atrial thrombus or moderate-to-severe MR (121, 143-145). (Level of Evidence: C)
2. Mitral valve surgery is reasonable for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III to IV) with severe MS (mitral valve area ≤1.5 cm², stage D), provided there are other operative indications (e.g., aortic valve disease, coronary artery disease (CAD), tricuspid regurgitation (TR), aortic aneurysm). *(Level of Evidence: C)*

**Class IIb**

1. Percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe MS (mitral valve area ≤1.5 cm², stage C) and valve morphology favorable for percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy in the absence of left atrial thrombus or moderate-to-severe MR who have new onset of AF. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

2. Percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy may be considered for symptomatic patients with mitral valve area greater than 1.5 cm² if there is evidence of hemodynamically significant MS based on pulmonary artery wedge pressure greater than 25 mm Hg or mean mitral valve gradient greater than 15 mm Hg during exercise. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

3. Percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III to IV) with severe MS (mitral valve area ≤1.5 cm², stage D) who have a suboptimal valve anatomy and who are not candidates for surgery or at high risk for surgery. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

4. Concomitant mitral valve surgery may be considered for patients with moderate MS (mitral valve area 1.6 cm² to 2.0 cm²) undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

5. Mitral valve surgery and excision of the left atrial appendage may be considered for patients with severe MS (mitral valve area ≤1.5 cm², stages C and D) who have had recurrent embolic events while receiving adequate anticoagulation. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Table 12. Summary of Recommendations for MS Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMBC is recommended for symptomatic patients with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage D) and favorable valve morphology in the absence of contraindications</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>(109-113, 115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral valve surgery is indicated in severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III/IV) with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage D) who are not high risk for surgery and who are not candidates for or failed previous PMBC</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(137-142)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concomitant mitral valve surgery is indicated for patients with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage C or D) undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMBC is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with very severe MS (MVA ≤1.0 cm², stage C) and favorable valve morphology in the absence of contraindications</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>(121, 143-145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral valve surgery is reasonable for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III/IV) with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage D), provided there are other operative indications</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMBC may be considered for asymptomatic patients with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage C) and favorable valve morphology who have new onset of AF in the absence of contraindications</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMBC may be considered for symptomatic patients with MVA &gt;1.5 cm² if there is evidence of hemodynamically significant MS during exercise</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMBC may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III/IV) with severe MS (MVA ≤1.5 cm², stage D) who have suboptimal valve anatomy and are not candidates for surgery or at high risk for surgery</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concomitant mitral valve surgery may be considered for patients with moderate MS (MVA 1.6-2.0 cm²) undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitral valve surgery and excision of the left atrial appendage may be</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AF indicates atrial fibrillation; COR, Class of Recommendations; LOE, Level of Evidence; MS, mitral stenosis; MVA, mitral valve area; NYHA, New York Heart Association; and PMBC, percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy.

Figure 3. Indications for Intervention for Rheumatic MS

AF indicates atrial fibrillation; LA, left atrial; MR, mitral regurgitation; MS, mitral stenosis; MVA, mitral valve area; MVR, mitral valve surgery (repair or replacement); NYHA, New York Heart Association; PCWP, pulmonary capillary wedge pressure; PMBC, percutaneous mitral balloon commissurotomy; and T ½, pressure half-time.

7. Mitral Regurgitation: Recommendations

7.1. Stages of Chronic MR
In assessing the patient with chronic MR, it is critical to distinguish between chronic primary (degenerative) MR and chronic secondary (functional) MR, as these 2 conditions have more differences than similarities.
In chronic primary MR, the pathology of ≥1 of the components of the valve (leaflets, chordae tendineae, papillary muscles, annulus) causes valve incompetence with systolic regurgitation of blood from the left ventricle to the LA (Table 13). The most common cause of chronic primary MR in developed countries is mitral valve prolapse, which has a wide spectrum of etiology and presentation. Younger populations present with severe myxomatous degeneration with gross redundancy of both anterior and posterior leaflets and the chordal apparatus (Barlow’s valve). Alternatively, older populations present with fibroelastic deficiency disease, in which lack of connective tissue leads to chordal rupture. The differentiation between these 2 etiologies has important implications for operative intervention. Other less common causes of chronic primary MR include IE, connective tissue disorders, rheumatic heart disease, cleft mitral valve, and radiation heart disease. If the subsequent volume overload of chronic primary MR is prolonged and severe, it causes myocardial damage, HF, and eventual death. Correction of the MR is curative. Thus, MR is “the disease.”

In chronic secondary MR, the mitral valve is usually normal (Table 14). Instead, severe LV dysfunction is caused either by CAD, related myocardial infarction (ischemic chronic secondary MR), or idiopathic myocardial disease (nonischemic chronic secondary MR). The abnormal and dilated left ventricle causes papillary muscle displacement, which in turn results in leaflet tethering with associated annular dilation that prevents coaptation. Because MR is only 1 component of the disease (severe LV dysfunction, coronary disease, or idiopathic myocardial disease are the others), restoration of mitral valve competence is not by itself curative; thus, the best therapy for chronic secondary MR is much less clear than it is for chronic primary MR. The data are limited, and there is greater difficulty in defining the severity of MR in patients with secondary MR than in those with primary MR. In patients with secondary MR, adverse outcomes are associated with a smaller calculated effective regurgitant orifice compared to primary MR due to multiple reasons. The MR will likely progress due to the associated progressive LV systolic dysfunction and adverse remodeling. In addition, there is an underestimation of effective regurgitant orifice area by the 2-dimensional echocardiography-derived flow convergence method due to the crescentic shape of the regurgitant orifice. There are the additional clinical effects of a smaller amount of regurgitation in the presence of compromised LV systolic function and baseline elevated filling pressures.
Table 13. Stages of Primary MR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valve Anatomy</th>
<th>Valve Hemodynamics*</th>
<th>Hemodynamic Consequences</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A     | At risk of MR | • Mild mitral valve prolapse with normal coaptation  
• Mild valve thickening and leaflet restriction | • No MR jet or small central jet area <20% LA on Doppler  
• Small vena contracta <0.3 cm | • None | • None |
| B     | Progressive MR | • Severe mitral valve prolapse with normal coaptation  
• Rheumatic valve changes with leaflet restriction and loss of central coapation  
• Prior IE | • Central jet MR 20%–40% LA or late systolic eccentric jet MR  
• Vena contracta <0.7 cm  
• Regurgitant volume <60 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction <50%  
• ERO <0.40 cm²  
• Angiographic grade 1–2+ | • Mild LA enlargement  
• No LV enlargement  
• Normal pulmonary pressure | • None |
| C     | Asymptomatic severe MR | • Severe mitral valve prolapse with loss of coaptation or flail leaflet  
• Rheumatic valve changes with leaflet restriction and loss of central coapation  
• Prior IE  
• Thickening of leaflets with radiation heart disease | • Central jet MR >40% LA or holosystolic eccentric jet MR  
• Vena contracta ≥0.7 cm  
• Regurgitant volume ≥60 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction ≥50%  
• ERO ≥0.40 cm²  
• Angiographic grade 3–4+ | • Moderate or severe LA enlargement  
• LV enlargement  
• Pulmonary hypertension may be present at rest or with exercise  
• C1: LVEF >60% and LVESD <40 mm  
• C2: LVEF ≤60% and LVESD ≥40 mm | • None |
| D     | Symptomatic severe MR | • Severe mitral valve prolapse with loss of coaptation or flail leaflet  
• Rheumatic valve changes with leaflet restriction and loss of central coapation  
• Prior IE  
• Thickening of leaflets with radiation heart disease | • Central jet MR >40% LA or holosystolic eccentric jet MR  
• Vena contracta ≥0.7 cm  
• Regurgitant volume ≥60 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction ≥50%  
• ERO ≥0.40 cm²  
• Angiographic grade 3–4+ | • Moderate or severe LA enlargement  
• LV enlargement  
• Pulmonary hypertension present | • Decreased exercise tolerance  
• Exertional dyspnea |

*Several valve hemodynamic criteria are provided for assessment of MR severity, but not all criteria for each category will be present in each patient. Categorization of MR severity as mild, moderate, or severe depends on data quality and integration of these parameters in conjunction with other clinical evidence.

ERO indicates effective regurgitant orifice; IE, infective endocarditis; LA, left atrium/atrial; LV, left ventricular; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; LVESD, left ventricular end-systolic dimension; and MR, mitral regurgitation.
# Table 14. Stages of Secondary MR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valve Anatomy</th>
<th>Valve Hemodynamics*</th>
<th>Associated Cardiac Findings</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A     | At risk of MR | • Normal valve leaflets, chords, and annulus in a patient with coronary disease or cardiomyopathy | • No MR jet or small central jet area <20% LA on Doppler  
• Small vena contracta <0.30 cm | • Normal or mildly dilated LV size with fixed (infarction) or inducible (ischemia) regional wall motion abnormalities  
• Primary myocardial disease with LV dilation and systolic dysfunction | Symptoms due to coronary ischemia or HF may be present that respond to revascularization and appropriate medical therapy |
| B     | Progressive MR | • Regional wall motion abnormalities with mild tethering of mitral leaflet  
• Annular dilation with mild loss of central coaptation of the mitral leaflets | • ERO <0.20 cm$^2$†  
• Regurgitant volume <30 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction <50% | • Regional wall motion abnormalities with reduced LV systolic function  
• LV dilation and systolic dysfunction due to primary myocardial disease | Symptoms due to coronary ischemia or HF may be present that respond to revascularization and appropriate medical therapy |
| C     | Asymptomatic severe MR | • Regional wall motion abnormalities and/or LV dilation with severe tethering of mitral leaflet  
• Annular dilation with severe loss of central coaptation of the mitral leaflets | • ERO ≥0.20 cm$^2$†  
• Regurgitant volume ≥30 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction ≥50% | • Regional wall motion abnormalities with reduced LV systolic function  
• LV dilation and systolic dysfunction due to primary myocardial disease | Symptoms due to coronary ischemia or HF may be present that respond to revascularization and appropriate medical therapy |
| D     | Symptomatic severe MR | • Regional wall motion abnormalities and/or LV dilation with severe tethering of mitral leaflet  
• Annular dilation with severe loss of central coaptation of the mitral leaflets | • ERO ≥0.20 cm$^2$†  
• Regurgitant volume ≥30 mL  
• Regurgitant fraction ≥50% | • Regional wall motion abnormalities with reduced LV systolic function  
• LV dilation and systolic dysfunction due to primary myocardial disease | HF symptoms due to MR persist even after revascularization and optimization of medical therapy  
• Decreased exercise tolerance  
• Exertional dyspnea |

*Several valve hemodynamic criteria are provided for assessment of MR severity, but not all criteria for each category will be present in each patient. Categorization of MR severity as mild, moderate, or severe depends on data quality and integration of these parameters in conjunction with other clinical evidence.

†The measurement of the proximal isovelocity surface area by 2D TTE in patients with secondary MR underestimates the true ERO due to the crescentic shape of the proximal convergence.

2D indicates 2-dimensional; ERO, effective regurgitant orifice; HF, heart failure; LA, left atrium; LV, left ventricular; MR, mitral regurgitation; and TTE, transthoracic echocardiogram.
7.2. Chronic Primary MR

7.2.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up

Class I

1. TTE is indicated for baseline evaluation of LV size and function, right ventricular (RV) function and left atrial size, pulmonary artery pressure, and mechanism and severity of primary MR (stages A to D) in any patient suspected of having chronic primary MR (6, 23, 146-162). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. CMR is indicated in patients with chronic primary MR to assess LV and RV volumes, function, or MR severity and when these issues are not satisfactorily addressed by TTE (157, 163, 164). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. Intraoperative TEE is indicated to establish the anatomic basis for chronic primary MR (stages C and D) and to guide repair (165, 166). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

4. TEE is indicated for evaluation of patients with chronic primary MR (stages B to D) in whom noninvasive imaging provides nondiagnostic information about severity of MR, mechanism of MR, and/or status of LV function. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIa

1. Exercise hemodynamics with either Doppler echocardiography or cardiac catheterization is reasonable in symptomatic patients with chronic primary MR where there is a discrepancy between symptoms and the severity of MR at rest (stages B and C) (167, 168). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. Exercise treadmill testing can be useful in patients with chronic primary MR to establish symptom status and exercise tolerance (stages B and C). *(Level of Evidence: C)*

7.2.2. Medical Therapy

Class IIa

1. Medical therapy for systolic dysfunction is reasonable in symptomatic patients with chronic primary MR (stage D) and LVEF less than 60% in whom surgery is not contemplated (169-173). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class III: No Benefit

1. Vasodilator therapy is not indicated for normotensive asymptomatic patients with chronic primary MR (stages B and C1) and normal systolic LV function (173-178). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

7.2.3. Intervention

See Table 15 for a summary of recommendations from this section.

Class I

1. Mitral valve surgery is recommended for symptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR (stage D) and LVEF greater than 30% (156, 179). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. Mitral valve surgery is recommended for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR and LV dysfunction (LVEF 30% to 60% and/or LVESD ≥40 mm, stage C2) (150-153, 180-182). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. Mitral valve repair is recommended in preference to mitral valve replacement (MVR) when surgical treatment is indicated for patients with chronic severe primary MR limited to the posterior leaflet (155, 183-198). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

4. Mitral valve repair is recommended in preference to MVR when surgical treatment is indicated for patients with chronic severe primary MR involving the anterior leaflet or both leaflets when a successful and durable repair can be accomplished (195-197, 199-203). *(Level of Evidence: B)*
5. Concomitant mitral valve repair or MVR is indicated in patients with chronic severe primary MR undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications (204). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class IIa

1. Mitral valve repair is reasonable in asymptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR (stage C1) with preserved LV function (LVEF >60% and LVESD <40 mm) in whom the likelihood of a successful and durable repair without residual MR is greater than 95% with an expected mortality rate of less than 1% when performed at a Heart Valve Center of Excellence (149, 203, 205-209). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

2. Mitral valve repair is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe nonrheumatic primary MR (stage C1) and preserved LV function (LVEF >60% and LVESD <40 mm) in whom there is a high likelihood of a successful and durable repair with 1) new onset of AF or 2) resting pulmonary hypertension (pulmonary artery systolic arterial pressure >50 mm Hg) (154, 205, 210-215). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. Concomitant mitral valve repair is reasonable in patients with chronic moderate primary MR (stage B) when undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIb

1. Mitral valve surgery may be considered in symptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR and LVEF less than or equal to 30% (stage D). *(Level of Evidence: C)*

2. Mitral valve repair may be considered in patients with rheumatic mitral valve disease when surgical treatment is indicated if a durable and successful repair is likely or when the reliability of long-term anticoagulation management is questionable (194, 202, 203). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

3. Transcatheter mitral valve repair may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III to IV) with chronic severe primary MR (stage D) who have favorable anatomy for the repair procedure and a reasonable life expectancy but who have a prohibitive surgical risk because of severe comorbidities and remain severely symptomatic despite optimal GDMT for HF (216). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

Class III: Harm

1. MVR should not be performed for the treatment of isolated severe primary MR limited to less than one half of the posterior leaflet unless mitral valve repair has been attempted and was unsuccessful (195-198). *(Level of Evidence: B)*

**Table 15. Summary of Recommendations for Chronic Primary MR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MV surgery is recommended for symptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR (stage D) and LVEF &gt;30%</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(156, 179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV surgery is recommended for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR and LV dysfunction (LVEF 30%-60% and/or LVESD ≥40 mm, stage C2)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(150-153, 180-182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV repair is recommended in preference to MVR when surgical treatment is indicated for patients with chronic severe primary MR limited to the posterior leaflet</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(155, 183-198)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV repair is recommended in preference to MVR when surgical treatment is indicated for patients with chronic severe primary MR involving the anterior leaflet or both leaflets when a successful and durable repair can be accomplished</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(195-197, 199-203)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concomitant MV repair or replacement is indicated in patients with chronic severe primary MR undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(204)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MV repair** is reasonable in asymptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR (stage C1) with preserved LV function (LVEF >60% and LVESD <40 mm) in whom the likelihood of a successful and durable repair without residual MR is >95% with an expected mortality rate of <1% when performed at a Heart Valve Center of Excellence. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(149, 203, 205-209)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MV repair** is reasonable for asymptomatic patients with chronic severe nonrheumatic primary MR (stage C1) and preserved LV function in whom there is a high likelihood of a successful and durable repair with 1) new onset of AF or 2) resting pulmonary hypertension (PA systolic arterial pressure >50 mm Hg).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(154, 205, 210-215)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concomitant MV repair is reasonable in patients with chronic moderate primary MR (stage B) undergoing cardiac surgery for other indications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MV surgery may be considered in symptomatic patients with chronic severe primary MR and LVEF ≤30% (stage D).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(194, 202, 203)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transcatheter MV repair** may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III/IV) with chronic severe primary MR (stage D) who have a reasonable life expectancy but a prohibitive surgical risk because of severe comorbidities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(216)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MVR should not be performed for treatment of isolated severe primary MR limited to less than one half of the posterior leaflet unless MV repair has been attempted and was unsuccessful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III: Harm</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(195-198)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7.3. Chronic Secondary MR**

**7.3.1. Diagnosis and Follow-Up**

**Class I**

1. TTE is useful to establish the etiology of chronic secondary MR (stages B to D) and the extent and location of wall motion abnormalities and to assess global LV function, severity of MR, and magnitude of pulmonary hypertension. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

2. Noninvasive imaging (stress nuclear/positron emission tomography, CMR, or stress echocardiography), cardiac CT angiography, or cardiac catheterization, including coronary arteriography, is useful to establish etiology of chronic secondary MR (stages B to D) and/or to assess myocardial viability, which in turn may influence management of functional MR. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

**7.3.2. Medical Therapy**

**Class I**

1. Patients with chronic secondary MR (stages B to D) and HF with reduced LVEF should receive standard GDMT therapy for HF, including ACE inhibitors, ARBs, beta blockers, and/or aldosterone antagonists as indicated (128, 217-221). *(Level of Evidence: A)*

2. Cardiac resynchronization therapy with biventricular pacing is recommended for symptomatic patients with chronic severe secondary MR (stages B to D) who meet the indications for device therapy (222, 223). *(Level of Evidence: A)*

AF indicates atrial fibrillation; COR, Class of Recommendation; LOE, Level of Evidence; LV, left ventricular; LVEF, left ventricular ejection fraction; LVESD, left ventricular end-systolic dimension; MR, mitral regurgitation; MV, mitral valve; MVR, mitral valve replacement; N/A, not applicable; NYHA, New York Heart Association; and PA, pulmonary artery.
7.3.3. Intervention

See Table 16 for a summary of recommendations for this section and Figure 4 for indications for surgery for MR.

Class IIa
1. Mitral valve surgery is reasonable for patients with chronic severe secondary MR (stages C and D) who are undergoing CABG or AVR. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

Class IIb
1. Mitral valve repair or replacement may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III to IV) with chronic severe secondary MR (stage D) who have persistent symptoms despite optimal GDMT for HF (224-235). *(Level of Evidence: B)*
2. Mitral valve repair may be considered for patients with chronic moderate secondary MR (stage B) who are undergoing other cardiac surgery. *(Level of Evidence: C)*

### Table 16. Summary of Recommendations for Chronic Severe Secondary MR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>COR</th>
<th>LOE</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MV surgery is reasonable for patients with chronic severe secondary MR (stages C and D) who are undergoing CABG or AVR</td>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV surgery may be considered for severely symptomatic patients (NYHA class III/IV) with chronic severe secondary MR (stage D)</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>(224-235)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV repair may be considered for patients with chronic moderate secondary MR (stage B) who are undergoing other cardiac surgery</td>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AVR indicates aortic valve replacement; CABG, coronary artery bypass graft; COR, Class of Recommendation; LOE, Level of Evidence; MR, mitral regurgitation; MV, mitral valve; N/A, not applicable; and NYHA, New York Heart Association.

**Figure 4.** Indications for Surgery for MR