

Congestive heart failure patients may benefit from a test for pulmonary hypertension

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(Medical Xpress) -- A new Emory University study highlights the importance of performing an echocardiogram to measure pulmonary artery systolic pressures in stable patients with congestive heart failure (HF). Researchers will present a study poster during the American Society of Echocardiography's 23rd Annual Scientific Sessions currently being held in National Harbor, MD.

The study, led by Sarawut Siwamogsatham, MD, found that, in stable outpatients with HF, pulmonary hypertension (defined as pulmonary artery systolic pressure greater than 45 mmHg), diagnosed by echocardiography, is a strong predictor of higher risk of clinical events and higher hospitalization rates.

According to the NIH, pulmonary hypertension is abnormally high blood

pressure in the arteries of the lungs. It makes the right side of the heart need to work harder than normal. Initial symptoms may include shortness of breath or light-headedness during activity and heart palpitations. Over time, symptoms occur with lighter activity or even while at rest.

"This is an important study for [congestive heart failure](#) patients. A simple, noninvasive echocardiogram to measure pulmonary artery systolic pressure can provide critical information to help predict if they are at a higher risk for adverse outcomes and help doctors target potential interventions to improve their health," explains primary investigator Andreas Kalogeropoulos, MD, assistant professor of medicine, Emory University School of Medicine.

An [echocardiogram](#) is a test that uses sound waves to create a moving picture of the heart. The picture is much more detailed than a plain x-ray image and involves no radiation exposure.

Provided by Emory University

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