



Differential Diagnosis of Heart Failure (HF)

Disease	Notes
Ischemic heart disease (see Acute Coronary Syndrome)	History of myocardial infarction, presence of infarction pattern on electrocardiogram (ECG), risk factors for coronary disease.
Idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy	HF in a patient with no coronary disease risk factors or known coronary disease.
Hypertension (see Hypertension)	History of poorly controlled hypertension, presence of an S4, left ventricular hypertrophy on echocardiogram or ECG.
Valvular heart disease (see Valvular Heart Disease)	Mitral regurgitation: holosystolic murmur at apex. Aortic stenosis: midsystolic murmur at base that radiates to carotid arteries.
Infective endocarditis (see Infective Endocarditis)	Fever, positive blood cultures, risk factors for bacteremia (intravenous drug use, invasive procedures).
Familial dilated cardiomyopathies	Family history of HF or sudden cardiac death in family.
Toxic cardiomyopathies	History of exposure to the toxic agent (e.g., alcohol, anthracycline, radiation, cocaine, catecholamines).
Collagen vascular disease	History of systemic lupus erythematosus, polyarteritis nodosa, scleroderma, dermatomyositis; positive serology results.
Endocrinologic disorders	Hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism, acromegaly, pheochromocytoma, diabetes mellitus
Peripartum cardiomyopathy	HF symptoms with left ventricular dysfunction within 6 months of a pregnancy.
Hypertrophic cardiomyopathies	Family history of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, echocardiographic and ECG findings of hypertrophy. Outflow tract gradient by physical examination or echocardiography.

Restrictive cardiomyopathies (amyloidosis, sarcoidosis, hemochromatosis, Fabry's disease, glycogen storage diseases, Gaucher's disease, mucopolysaccharidosis, endomyocardial fibrosis, hypereosinophilic syndrome)

Thickening of the myocardium on echocardiogram suggesting an infiltrative process, cardiac MRI showing infiltration, family history of an inborn error of metabolism or amyloidosis, presence of S4 on examination, right-sided heart failure more severe than left-sided, other organs involved in underlying disease process.

MRI = magnetic resonance imaging.

Table adapted from *Physicians Information and Education Resource (PIER)*, Heart Failure module.