

Preface

One challenge in editing a textbook is that by the time the book is published, it is outdated. We believe that the present textbook on AHFS stands up to this challenge. AHFS is a new and rapidly evolving field. At present, we are just starting to learn about AHFS and to develop paradigms similar to those created in the early 1980s for chronic heart failure, one of the fastest changing areas in cardiovascular medicine during the last 20 years. Researchers have only started to measure how important a burden AHFS is on health care.

We are beginning to investigate some reasonable pathophysiological hypotheses. Only recently, the ESC and ACC/AHA issued the first set of guidelines. None of these guidelines is truly evidence based, as only a few clinical trials have investigated new treatments for AHFS and even fewer have yielded positive results. Therefore, the editors felt the need to assemble in a single compendium a baseline document that establishes the current knowledge of this syndrome. In so doing, we have also tried to highlight unmet needs and to delineate areas for future research. Finally, the editors addressed the large heterogeneity of this syndrome by inviting a variety of contributors with different backgrounds and from different continents to participate.

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