

# Rise in Serum Creatinine and Congestion in Acute Decompensated Heart Failure; What Do We Really Know?



**Amir Kazory, MD, FASN, FACC**

Professor and Vice-Chief of Clinical Affairs

Division of Nephrology, Hypertension, and Renal Transplantation

University of Florida

# Disclosures

Baxter, Inc. – Cardiology Advisory Board

CHF Solutions, Inc. - Scientific Advisory Board

Otsuka America, Inc. - Consultant

Relypsa, Inc. - Consultant

W.L. Gore Inc. - Consultant

# Acute Decompensated Heart Failure (ADHF)

- Lifetime prevalence: 20–33 %
- Currently, over 5 million Americans with HF (more than 8 million by 2030)
- ADHF : the leading cause of hospitalization in patients over 65
- ADHF: the highest rate of 30-day re-hospitalization among all medical conditions
- ADHF: the 3-month re-hospitalization rate of 40%
- ADHF: the 1-year mortality rate of over 30%
- Total costs for HF: \$31 billion in 2012, estimated at \$70 billion in 2030  
(80% due to hospitalization) – *Major Financial Burden on Healthcare*

# Cardiorenal Syndrome

High Backward Pressure

Low Forward Flow

Decompensated Heart Failure

Diuretic Use

↑ LVEDP

↑ Afterload

↓ Effective Volume

Volume Overload

Diuretic Resistance

↓ Water Clearance

↑ Sodium Re-absorption

↑ Right Atrial Pressure

↑ Inflammatory Cytokines

Venous Congestion

↑ Renal Venous Pressure

Deterioration in Renal Hemodynamics and Function

↓ Cardiac Output

↑ SNS  
↑ AVP  
↑ Renin  
↑ Angiotensin

Neurohormonal Activation

Systemic Vasoconstriction

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## Congestion

The main reason for hospitalization of patients with Acute Heart Failure (93%)

ADHERE Registry

Volume Overload

Diuretic Resistance

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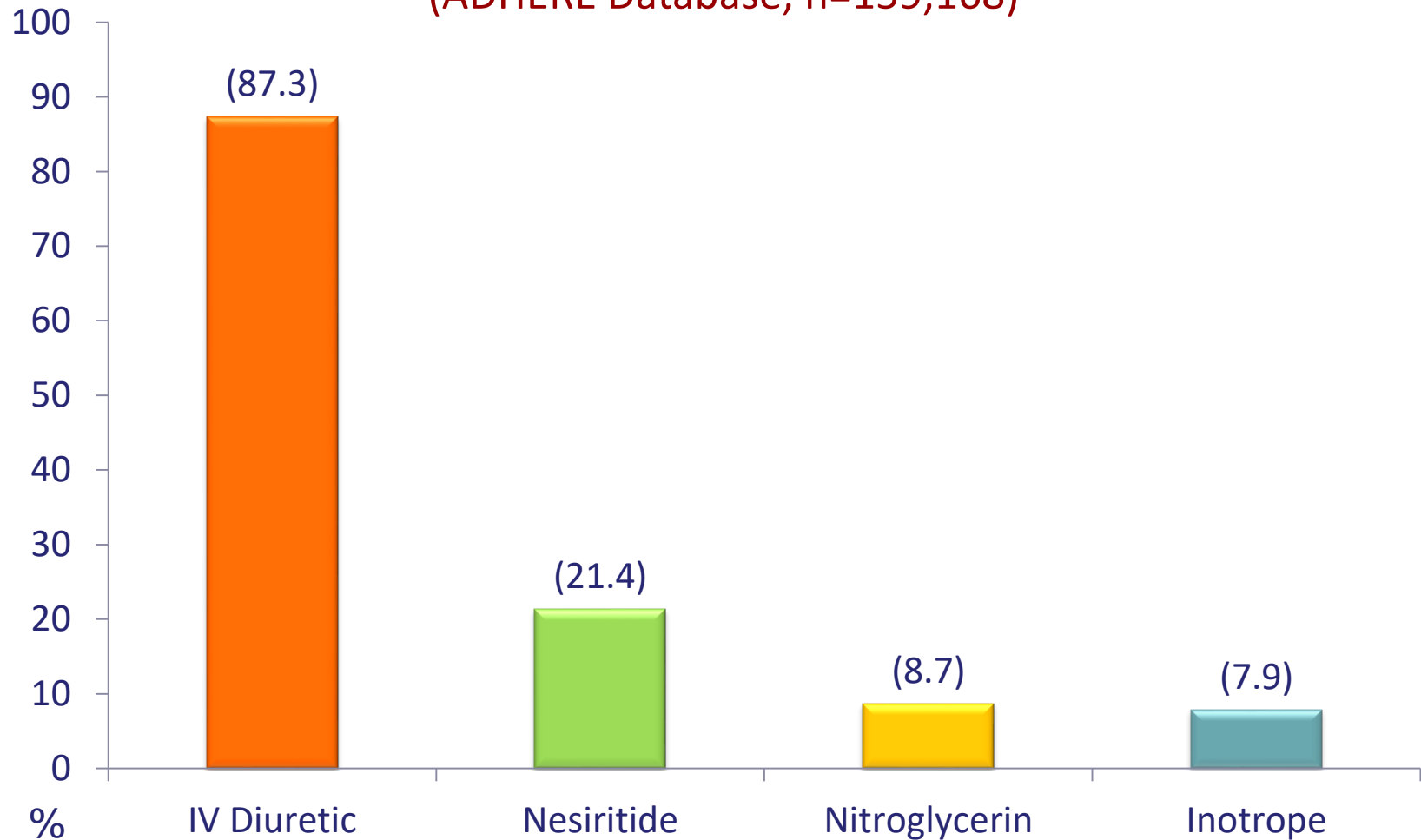
Systemic Vasoconstriction

Deterioration in Renal Hemodynamics and Function

# How do we manage congestion in ADHF?

# Contemporary Treatment of ADHF

(ADHERE Database, n=159,168)

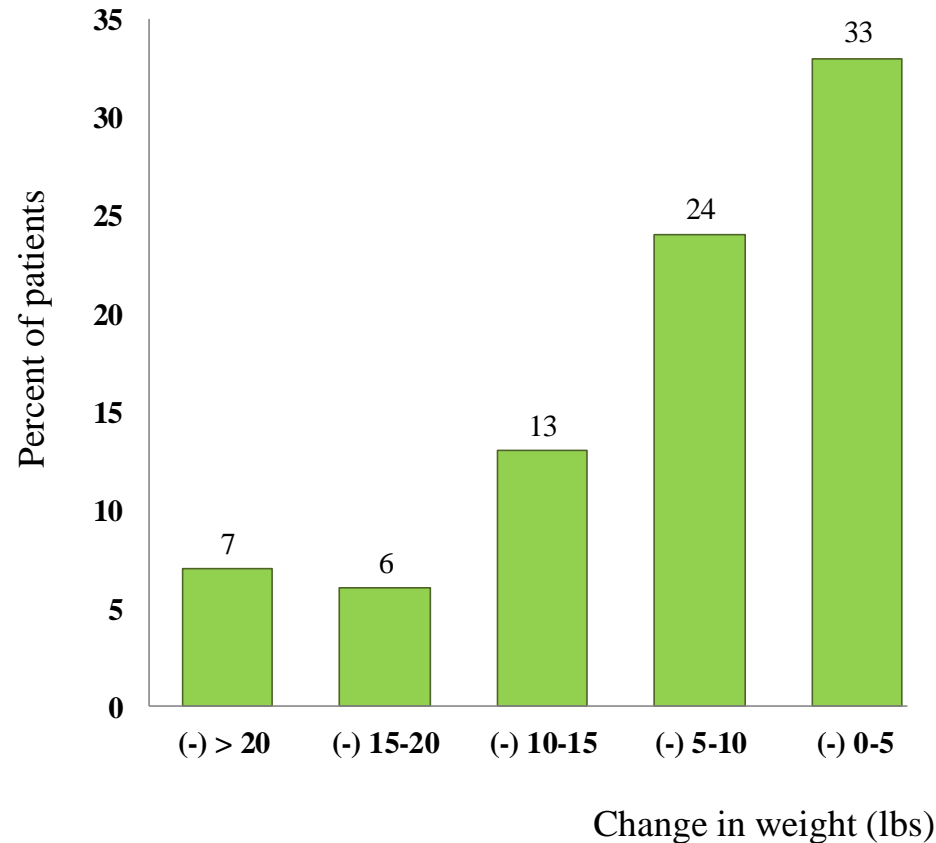




**How well are we  
managing congestion in  
ADHF now?**

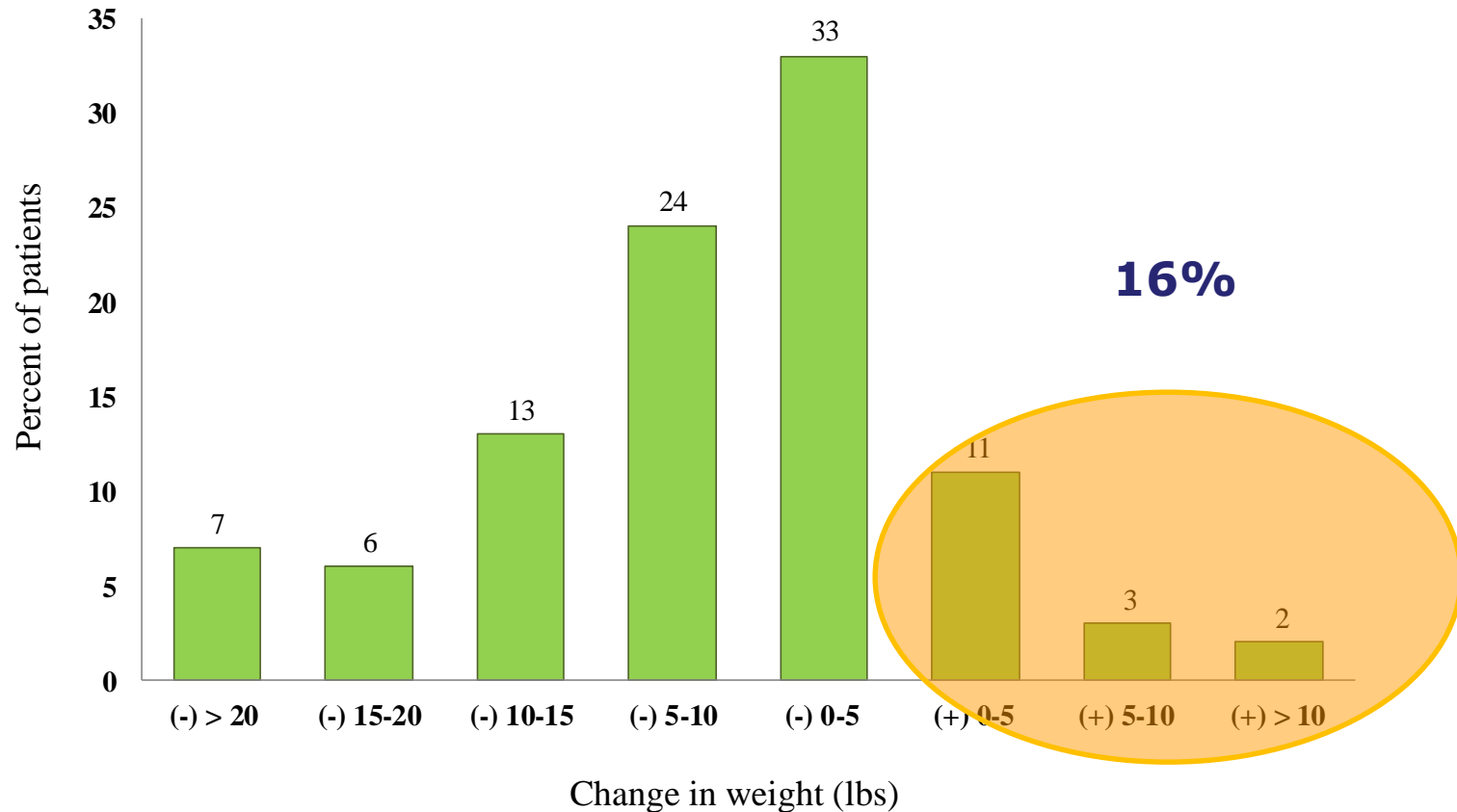
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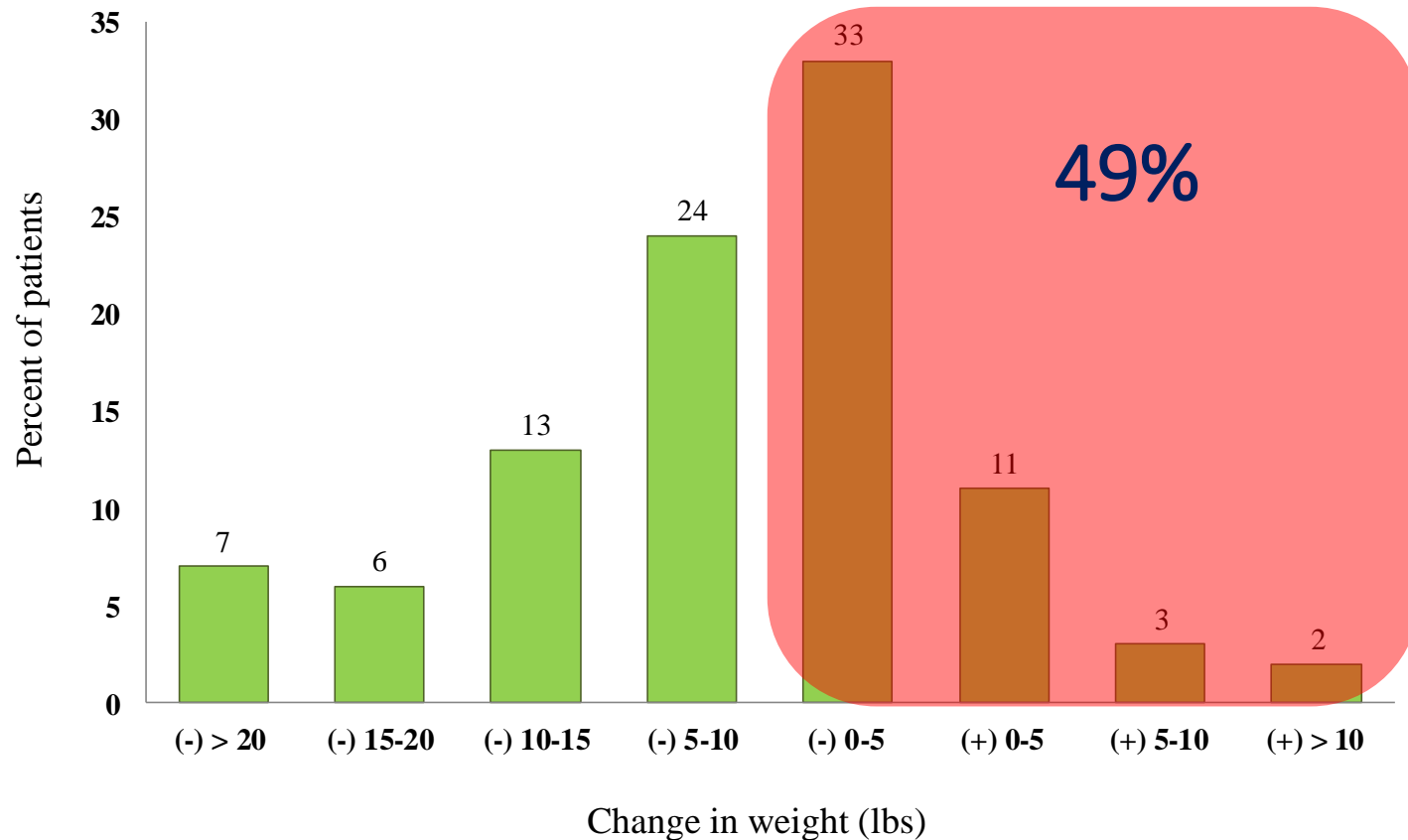
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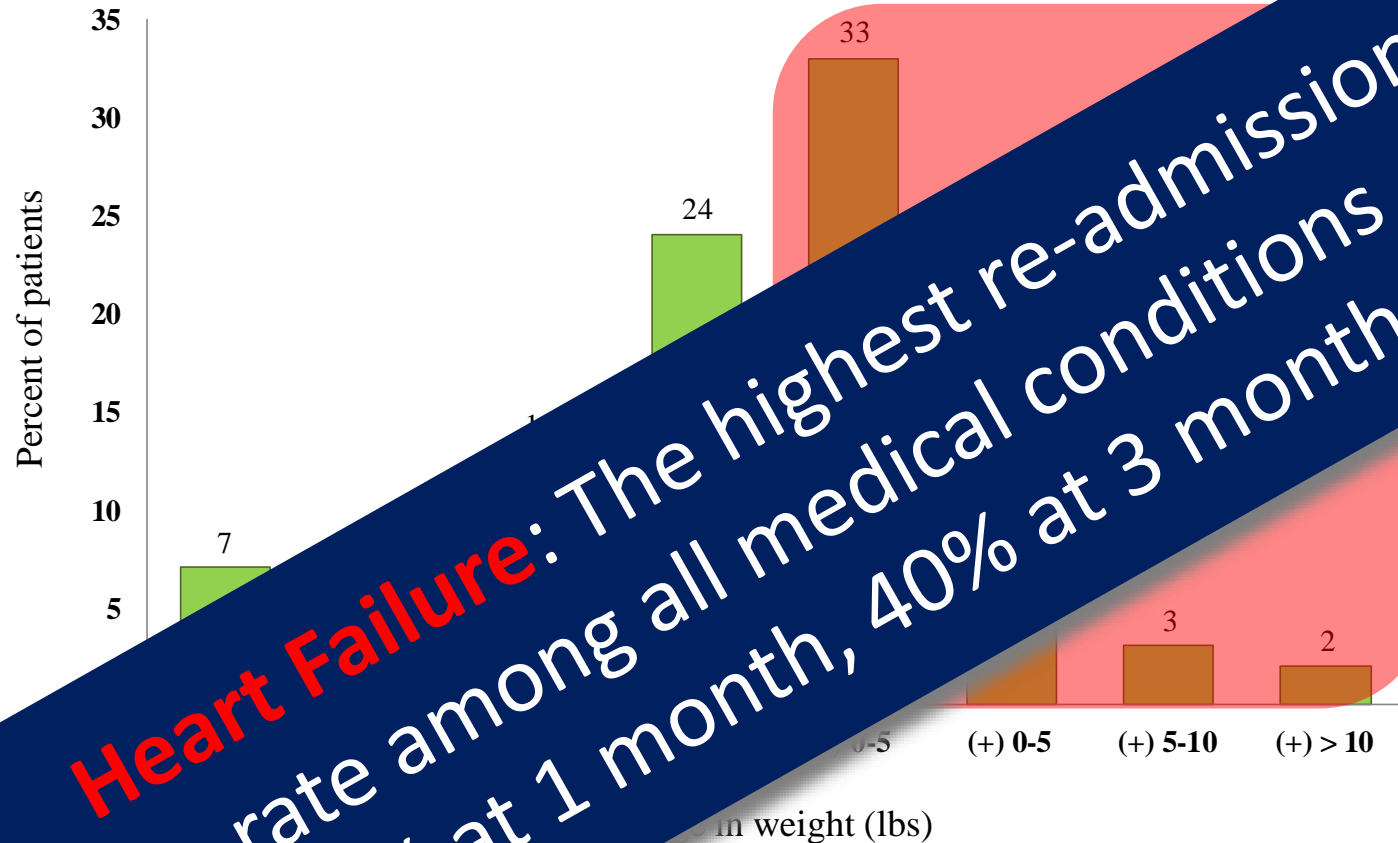
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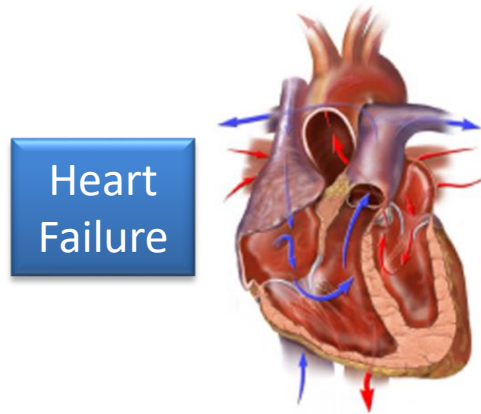


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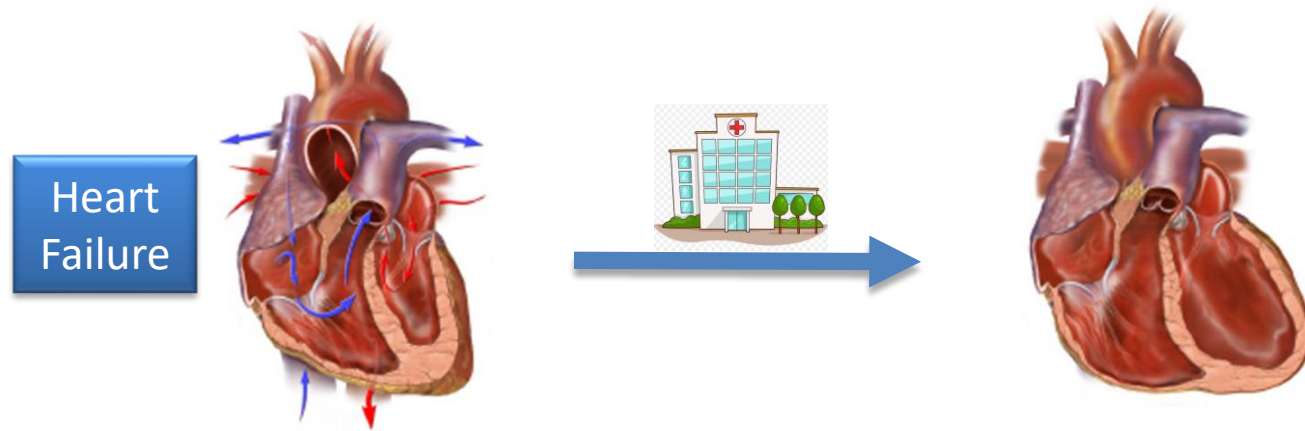
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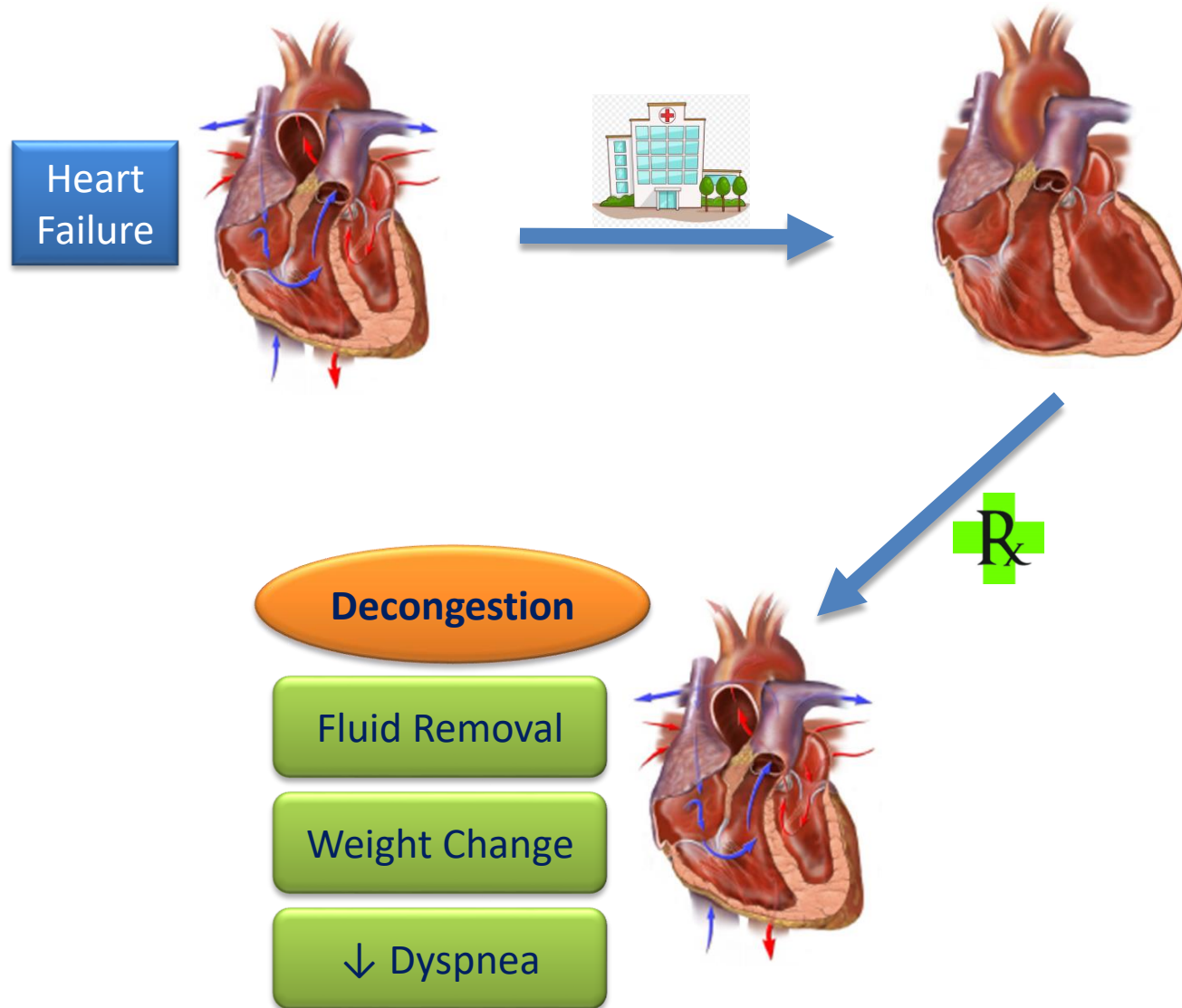
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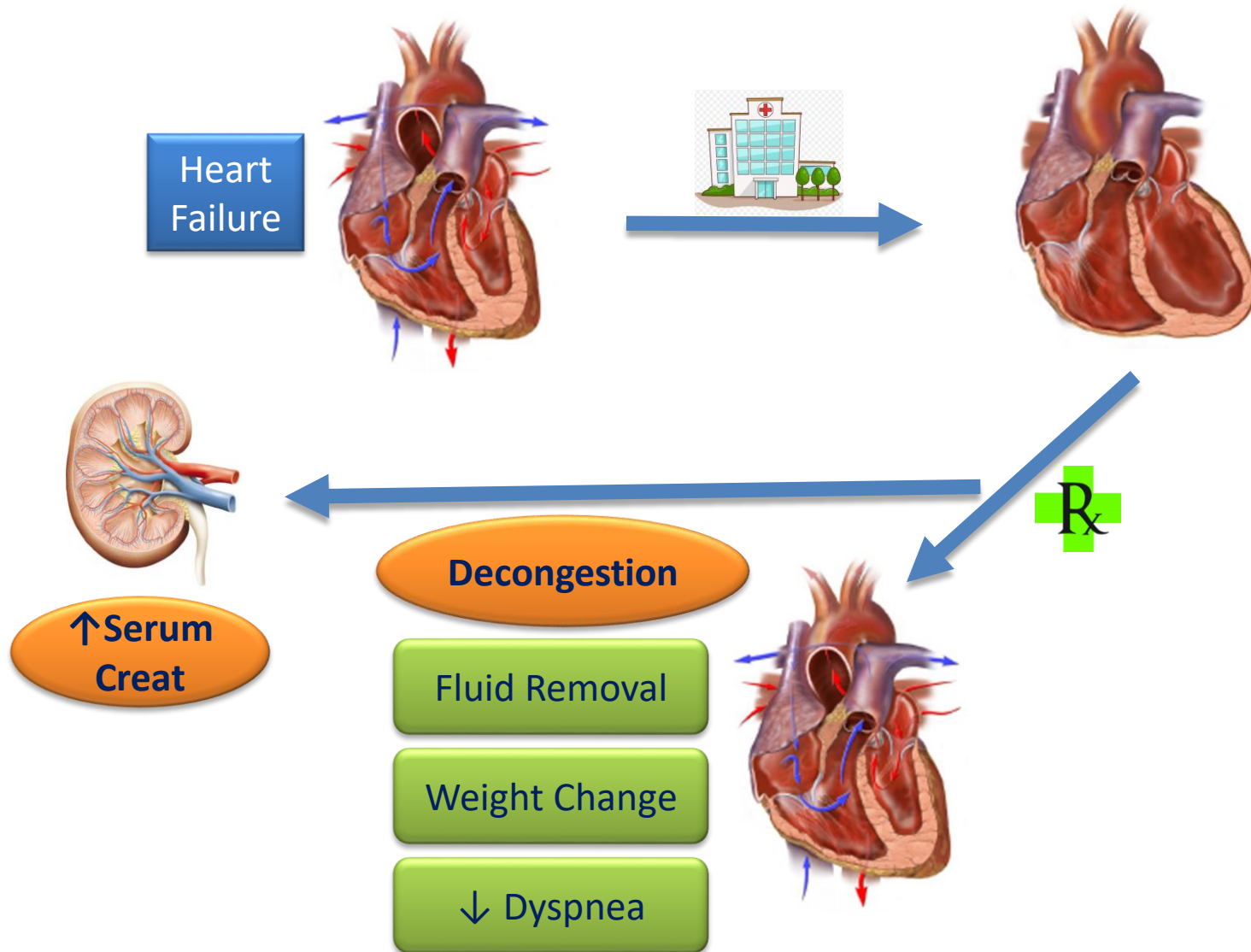


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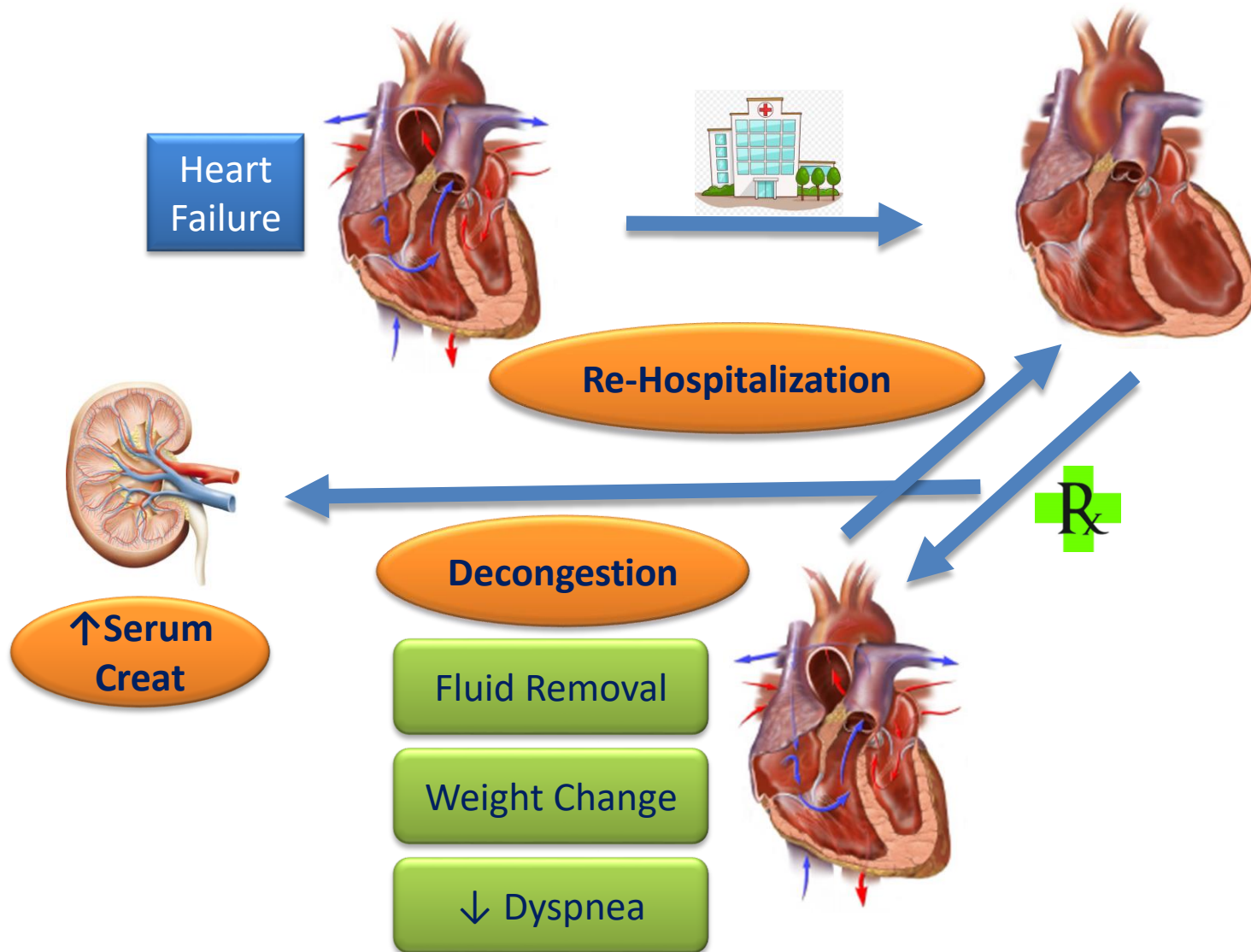




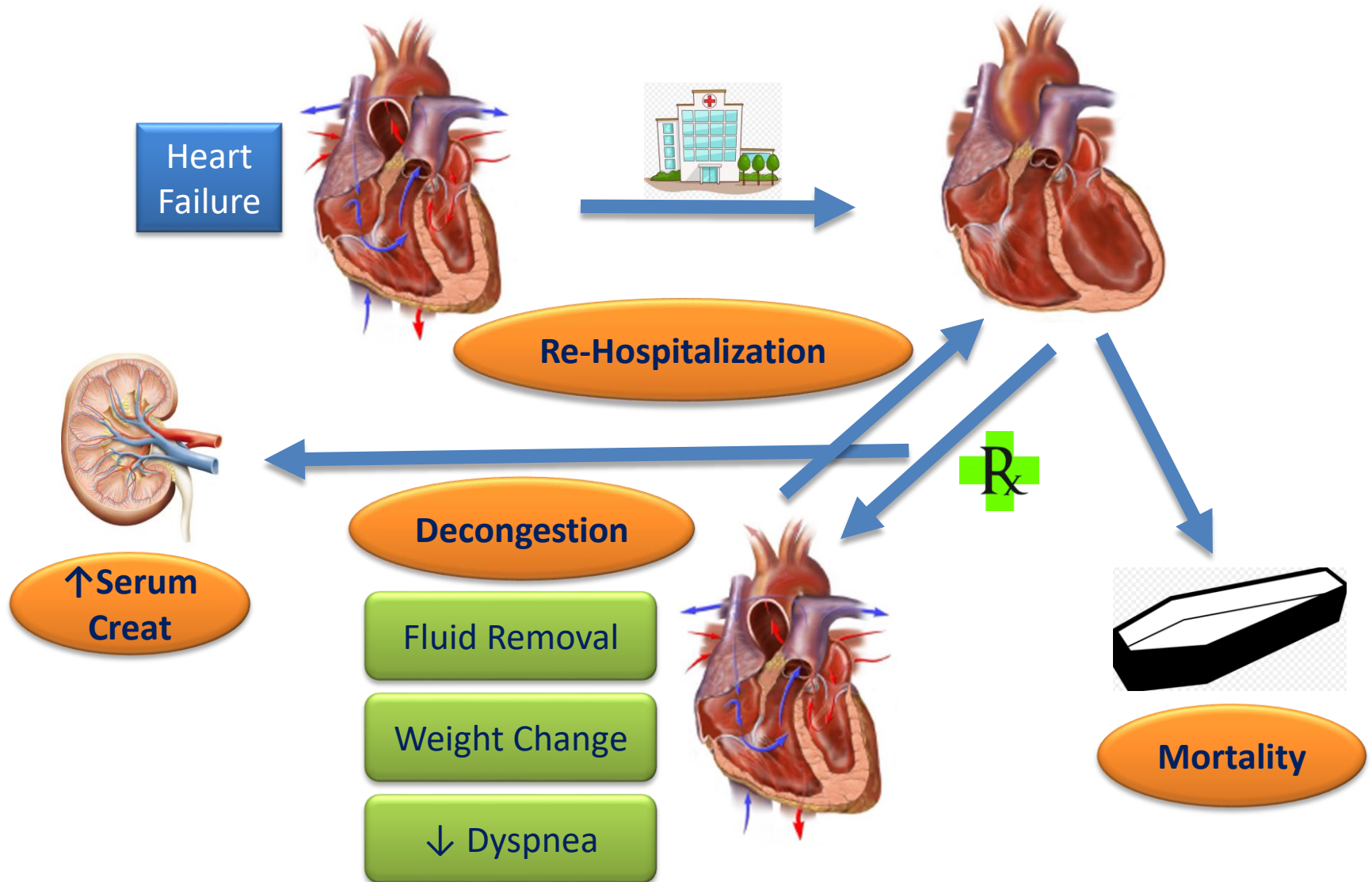
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## - Efficacy

- Fluid Removal
- Change in Weight
- Improvement of Dyspnea
  - Jugular venous distention of < 8 cm
  - Orthopnea
  - Peripheral edema at hospital discharge
  - Changes in B-type natriuretic peptide
  - Lung ultrasound, Bioimpedance Cardiography

## - Safety

- Renal Function
  - Serum creatinine (sCr)
  - Blood urea nitrogen (BUN)
  - BUN/sCr
  - Glomerular filtration rate (eGFR)
  - Renal biomarkers

## - Re-Hospitalization

- Unscheduled clinic visit
- ED visit
  - Length of stay during the index hospitalization
  - Total number of days re-hospitalized for HF at 30 and 90 days
  - IV therapy for HF , including diuretics and/or positive inotropic agents and/or vasodilators at 30 and 90 days after discharge
  - Total number of HF re-hospitalizations at 30 and 90 days after discharge
  - Total number of cardiovascular re-hospitalizations at 30 and 90 days after discharge
  - Total number of days for CV re-hospitalizations at 30 and 90 days after discharge

## - Mortality

- Heart Failure
- All Cause-

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# Why Use “Increase in Serum Creatinine” as a Surrogate Endpoint in HF Trials?

A surrogate endpoint (SE) is a laboratory measure or a physical sign that is intended to be used as a ***substitute for a clinically meaningful endpoint***.

- 1) Changes induced by a therapy on a SE are expected to reflect changes in a clinically meaningful endpoint.
- 2) This expectation must be supported by strong data (“**validation**”).
- 3) Ideally, the surrogate should exist within the therapeutic pathway between the treatment and meaningful benefit

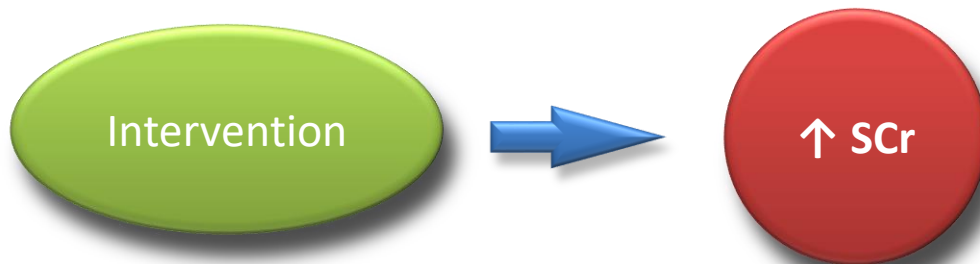


Intervention

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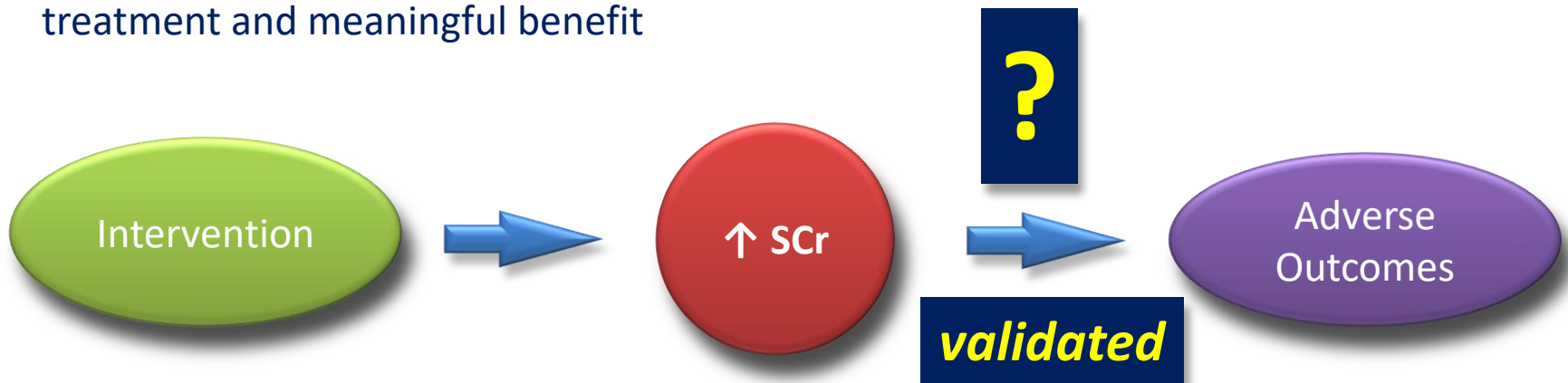




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# WRF is associated with increased mortality in ADHF

1681  
patients

Outcomes	Total	WRF Absent	WRF Present	Adjusted Estimate*
In-hospital mortality	68 (4%)	36 (3%)	32 (7%)	2.72 (1.62–4.58)
30-d mortality	123 (7%)	76 (6%)	47 (10%)	1.87 (1.25–2.80)
30-d readmission, all-cause	296 (18%)	201 (17%)	95 (20%)	1.29 (0.98–1.71)
30-d readmission, heart failure related	118 (7%)	80 (7%)	38 (8%)	1.17 (0.77–1.77)
6-month mortality	354 (21%)	235 (19%)	119 (25%)	1.56 (1.19–2.05)
6-month readmission, all-cause	790 (47%)	555 (46%)	235 (50%)	1.16 (0.93–1.44)
6-month readmission, heart failure related	380 (23%)	264 (22%)	116 (25%)	1.07 (0.82–1.39)
Length of hospital stay, mean (SD) (d)	7.55 (4.70)	6.93 (3.92)	9.14 (6.01)	2.28 (0.25) <sup>†</sup>
Hospital cost, mean (SD)	\$6,823 (\$5,175)	\$6,327 (\$4,874)	\$8,085 (\$5,665)	\$1,758 (\$287.2) <sup>†</sup>

Estimates were odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals for mortality and readmission outcomes, and regression coefficients and their standard errors for length of hospital stay and hospital cost outcomes; estimates adjusted for sex, age, diabetes, hypertension, rates, pulse, baseline creatinine, systolic blood pressure, and left ventricular ejection fraction.

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# Increase in S creat (“WRF”): Impact on Survival

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patients

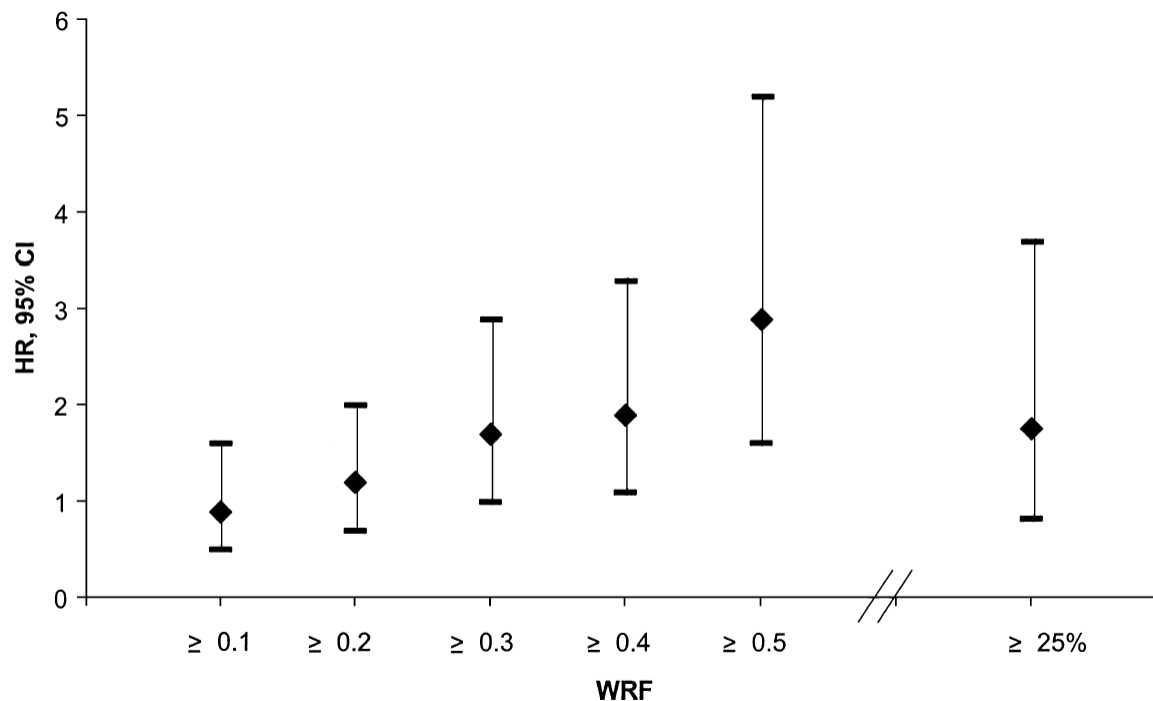
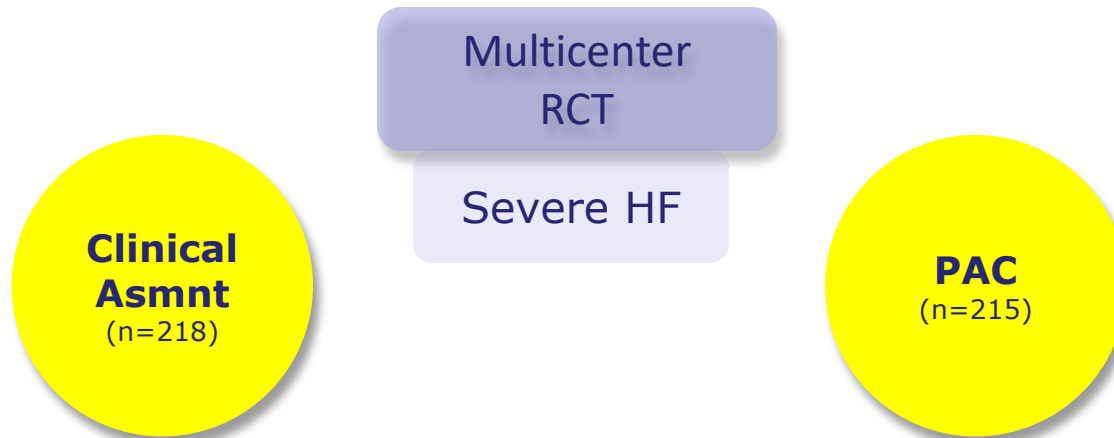


Fig. 3. Adjusted hazard ratio (HR) for mortality.

# The ESCAPE Trial



The primary end point: days alive out of the hospital during 6 months following randomization, component end points included time to events.

Secondary End Points: physiologic secondary end points, focusing on mitral regurgitation, natriuretic peptides, and peak oxygen consumption, were selected as measurable without knowledge of group assignment. Other functional end points were 6-minute walk distance, the Minnesota Living with Heart Failure questionnaire, and the time trade-off tool.

# The ESCAPE Trial

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patients

**Table 2** Relationship Between Renal Parameters and 6-Month Outcomes

	Time to Death			Time to Death or Rehospitalization		
	HR*	95% CI	p Value	HR*	95% CI	p Value
Baseline SCr	1.20	1.11–1.29	<0.0001	1.14	1.08–1.21	<0.0001
Baseline eGFR	1.25	1.13–1.38	<0.0001	1.10	1.05–1.15	<0.0001
Discharge SCr	1.30	1.20–1.41	<0.0001	1.14	1.08–1.21	<0.0001
Discharge eGFR	1.28	1.14–1.43	<0.0001	1.09	1.03–1.15	0.002
≥0.3 mg/dl ↑ SCr†	1.31	0.81–2.10	0.27	1.26	0.96–1.64	0.09
≥25% ↓ eGFR‡	1.49	0.91–2.44	0.12	1.06	0.79–1.43	0.69

\*Hazard ratio (HR) calculated per 0.3-mg/dl increments in serum creatinine (SCr) and per 10-ml/min decrements in estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). Worsening renal function, defined as: 1) †an increase in SCr ≥0.3 mg/dl; and 2) ‡a decrease in eGFR ≥25% from baseline to discharge, is treated as a dichotomous variable.

CI = confidence interval.

Baseline RF (and also discharge RF) can impact outcomes, but not WRF

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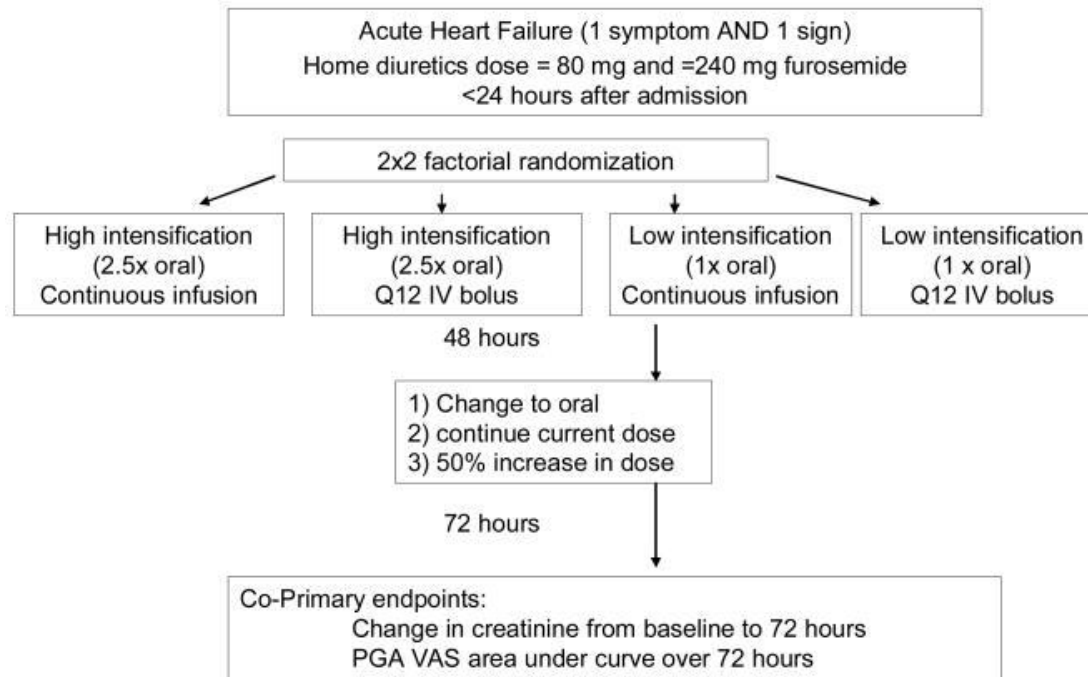
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# The Dose Trial



## Diuretic Optimization Strategies Evaluation

# The Dose Trial

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patients

**Table 2. Secondary End Points for Each Treatment Comparison.\***

End Point	Bolus Every 12 Hr (N = 156)	Continuous Infusion (N = 152)	P Value	Low Dose (N = 151)	High Dose (N = 157)	P Value
AUC for dyspnea at 72 hr	4456±1468	4699±1573	0.36	4478±1550	4668±1496	0.04
Freedom from congestion at 72 hr — no./total no. (%)	22/153 (14)	22/144 (15)	0.78	16/143 (11)	28/154 (18)	0.09
Change in weight at 72 hr — lb	−6.8±7.8	−8.1±10.3	0.20	−6.1±9.5	−8.7±8.5	0.01
Net fluid loss at 72 hr — ml	4237±3208	4249±3104	0.89	3575±2635	4899±3479	0.001
Change in NT-proBNP at 72 hr — pg/ml	−1316±4364	−1773±3828	0.44	−1194±4094	−1882±4105	0.06
Worsening or persistent heart failure — no./total no. (%)	38/154 (25)	34/145 (23)	0.78	38/145 (26)	34/154 (22)	0.40
Treatment failure — no./total no. (%)†	59/155 (38)	57/147 (39)	0.88	54/147 (37)	62/155 (40)	0.56
Increase in creatinine of >0.3 mg/dl within 72 hr — no./total no. (%)	27/155 (17)	28/146 (19)	0.64	20/147 (14)	35/154 (23)	0.04
Length of stay in hospital — days			0.97			0.55
Median	5	5		6	5	
Interquartile range	3–9	3–8		4–9	3–8	
Alive and out of hospital — days			0.36			0.42
Median	51	51		50	52	
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HD group: better decongested, WRF more often, but no impact on outcome

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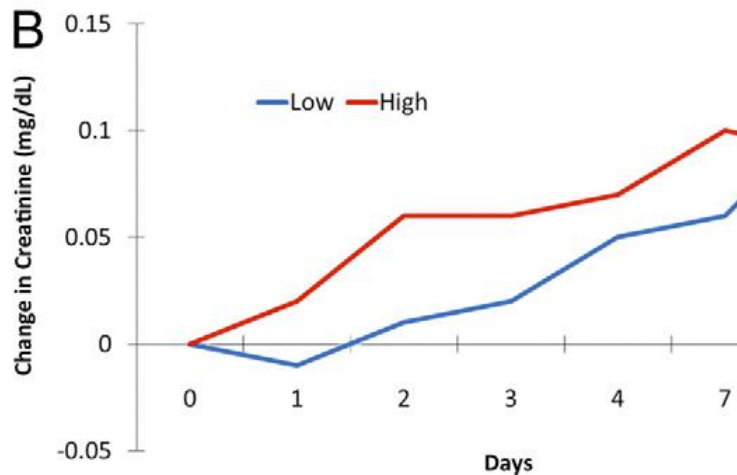
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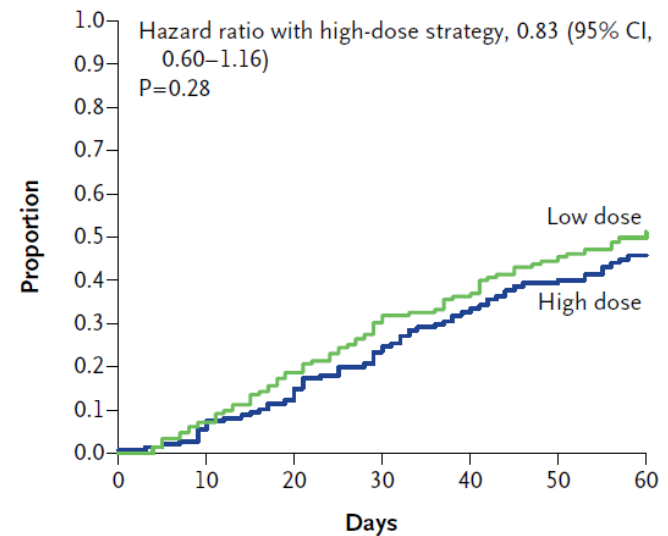
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Change in weight at 72 hr — lb	−6.8±7.8	−8.1±10.3	0.20	−6.1±9.5	−8.7±8.5	0.01
Net fluid loss at 72 hr — ml	4237±3208	4249±3104	0.89	3575±2635	4899±3479	0.001
Change in NT-proBNP at 72 hr — pg/ml	−1316±4364	−1773±3828	0.44	−1194±4094	−1882±4105	0.06
Worsening or persistent heart failure — no./total no. (%)	38/154 (25)	34/145 (23)	0.78	38/145 (26)	34/154 (22)	0.40
Treatment failure — no./total no. (%)†	59/155 (38)	57/147 (39)	0.88	54/147 (37)	62/155 (40)	0.56
Increase in creatinine of >0.3 mg/dl within 72 hr — no./total no. (%)	27/155 (17)	28/146 (19)	0.64	20/147 (14)	35/154 (23)	0.04
Length of stay in hospital — days			0.97			0.55
Median	5	5		6	5	
Interquartile range	3–9	3–8		4–9	3–8	
Alive and out of hospital — days			0.36			0.42
Median	51	51		50	52	
Interquartile range	42–55	38–55		39–54	42–56	

HD group: better decongested, WRF more often, but no impact on outcome

# The Dose Trial



**B Low-Dose vs. High-Dose Strategy**

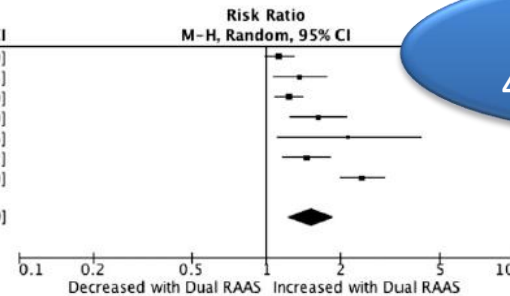


HD group: more WRF, but no impact on outcomes (death, re-hospit, ED visit)

# Short-term SCr as an EP in Clinical Trials

## A Event: AKI (Acute Increase in Serum Creatinine)

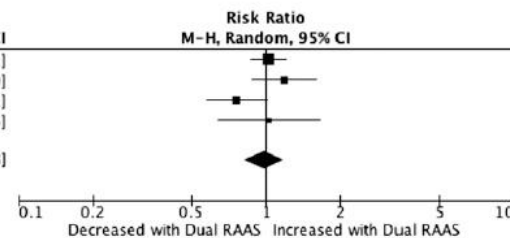
	Dual RAAS		Single RAAS			Risk Ratio
Study or Subgroup	Events	Total	Events	Total	Weight	M-H, Random, 95% CI
ALTITUDE	418	4250	371	4250	16.8%	1.13 [0.99, 1.29]
ASTRONAUT	134	808	98	810	14.7%	1.37 [1.08, 1.75]
EMPHASIS-HF	411	1364	335	1373	17.0%	1.23 [1.09, 1.40]
NEPHRON-D	130	724	80	724	14.3%	1.63 [1.25, 2.10]
ONTARGET	28	12500	13	12500	6.7%	2.15 [1.12, 4.16]
TOPCAT	175	1722	120	1723	15.1%	1.46 [1.17, 1.82]
Val-Heft	302	2511	123	2499	15.5%	2.44 [2.00, 2.99]
<b>Total (95% CI)</b>		<b>23879</b>		<b>23879</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1.52 [1.22, 1.89]</b>
Total events	1598		1140			
Heterogeneity: Tau <sup>2</sup> = 0.07; Chi <sup>2</sup> = 46.50, df = 6 (P < 0.00001); I <sup>2</sup> = 87%						
Test for overall effect: Z = 3.80 (P = 0.0001)						



7 RCT's  
48,436 patients

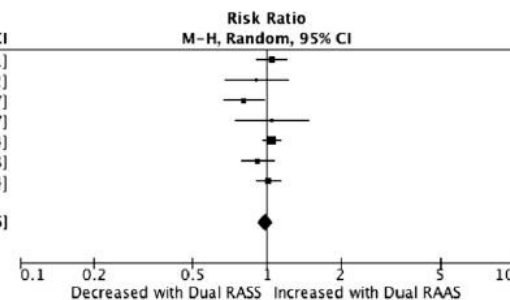
## B Event: CKD

	Dual RAAS		Single RAAS			Risk Ratio
Study or Subgroup	Events	Total	Events	Total	Weight	M-H, Random, 95% CI
ALTITUDE	257	4250	251	4250	40.7%	1.02 [0.86, 1.21]
ASTRONAUT	84	808	71	810	22.8%	1.19 [0.88, 1.60]
NEPHRON-D	77	724	101	724	25.1%	0.76 [0.58, 1.01]
ONTARGET	34	12500	33	12500	11.5%	1.03 [0.64, 1.66]
<b>Total (95% CI)</b>		<b>18282</b>		<b>18284</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0.98 [0.82, 1.18]</b>
Total events	452		456			
Heterogeneity: Tau <sup>2</sup> = 0.01; Chi <sup>2</sup> = 4.96, df = 3 (P = 0.17); I <sup>2</sup> = 40%						
Test for overall effect: Z = 0.18 (P = 0.86)						



## C Event: Mortality

	Dual RAAS		Single RAAS			Risk Ratio	
Study or Subgroup	Events	Total	Events	Total	Weight	M-H, Random, 95% CI	
ALTITUDE	376	4250	358	4250	16.4%	1.05 [0.91, 1.21]	
ASTRONAUT	77	808	85	810	4.9%	0.91 [0.68, 1.22]	
EMPHASIS-HF	171	1364	213	1373	10.5%	0.81 [0.67, 0.97]	
NEPHRON-D	63	724	60	724	3.7%	1.05 [0.75, 1.47]	
ONTARGET	1065	12550	1014	12550	29.3%	1.05 [0.97, 1.14]	
TOPCAT	252	1722	274	1723	13.7%	0.92 [0.79, 1.08]	
Val-Heft	495	2511	484	2499	21.4%	1.02 [0.91, 1.14]	
<b>Total (95% CI)</b>		<b>23929</b>		<b>23929</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0.99 [0.92, 1.06]</b>	
Total events	2499		2488				
Heterogeneity: Tau <sup>2</sup> = 0.00; Chi <sup>2</sup> = 8.50, df = 6 (P = 0.20); I <sup>2</sup> = 29%							
Test for overall effect: Z = 0.30 (P = 0.76)							

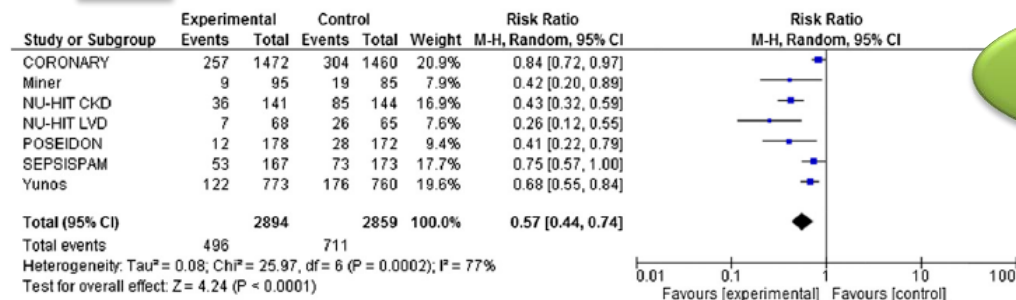


Interventions that **increased** the risk of AKI (dual or add-on RAAS blockade)

[Coca SG, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2016; 27: 2529]

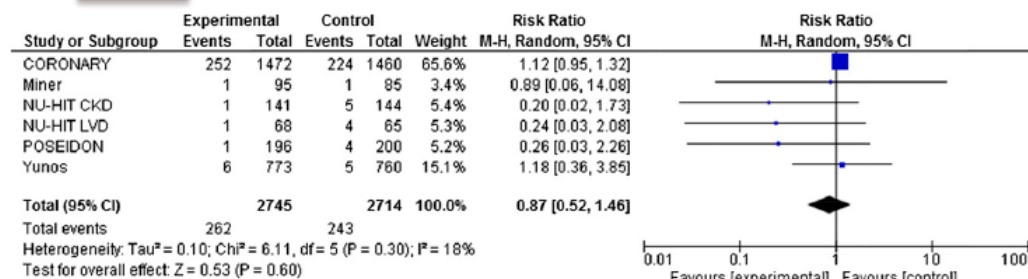
# Short-term SCr as an EP in Clinical Trials

## A Event: AKI (Acute Increase in Serum Creatinine)

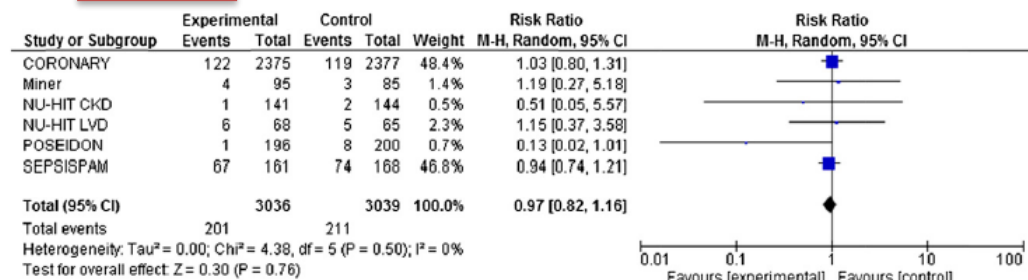


7 RCT's  
5,817 patients

## B Event: CKD



## C Event: Mortality

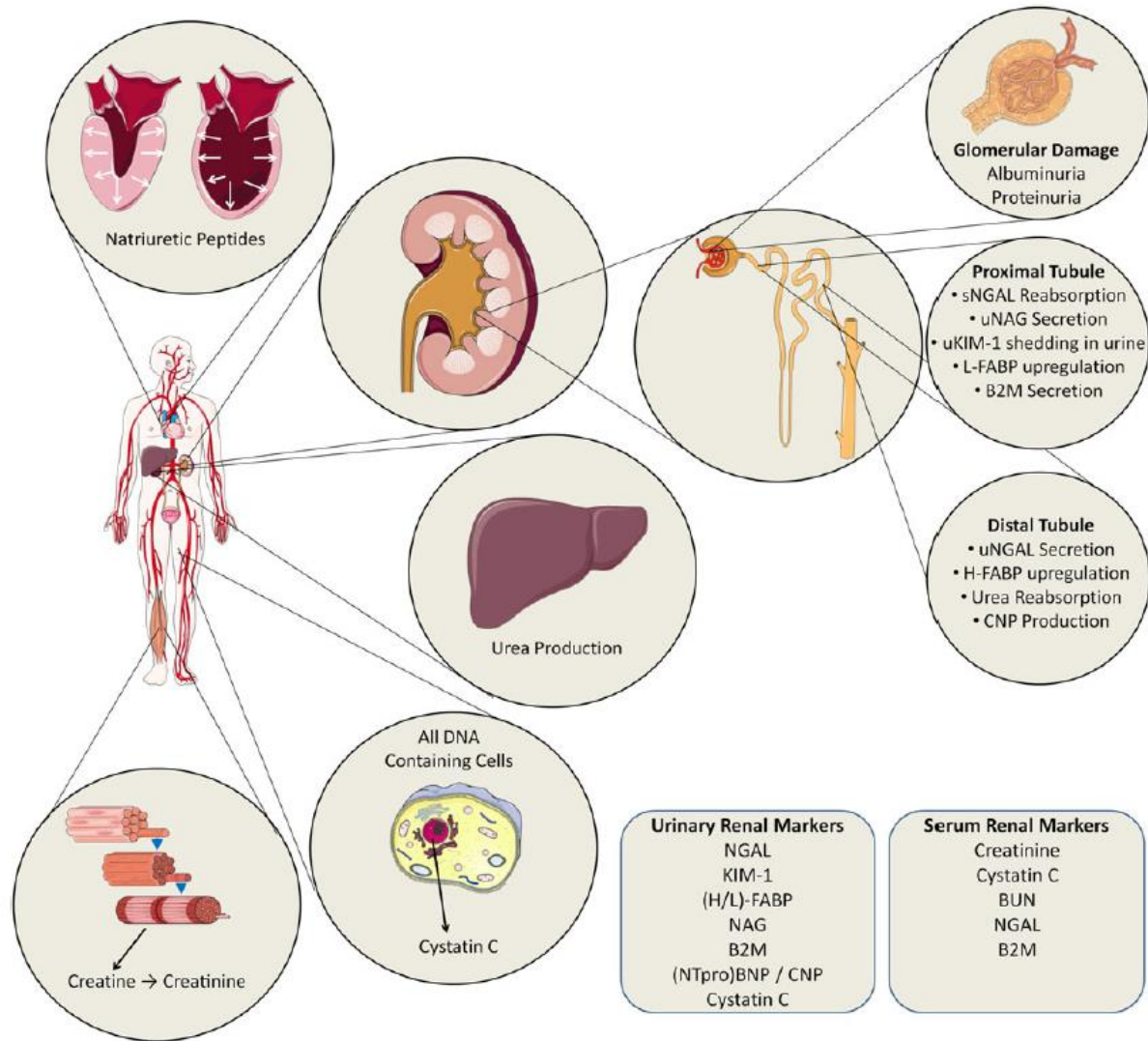


Interventions that decreased the risk of AKI

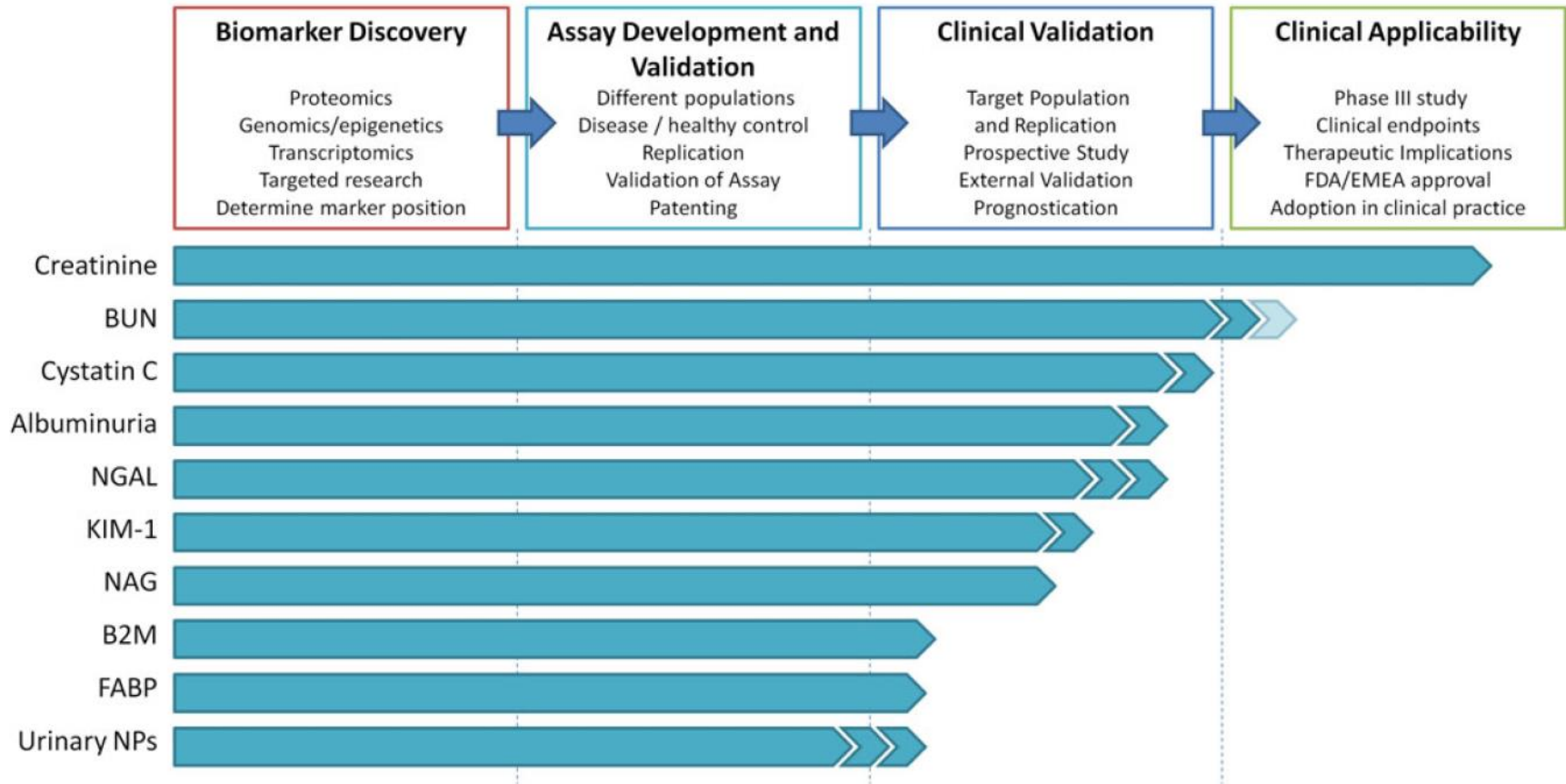
[Coca SG, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2016; 27: 2529]



# Biomarkers of Renal Injury and Function in HF

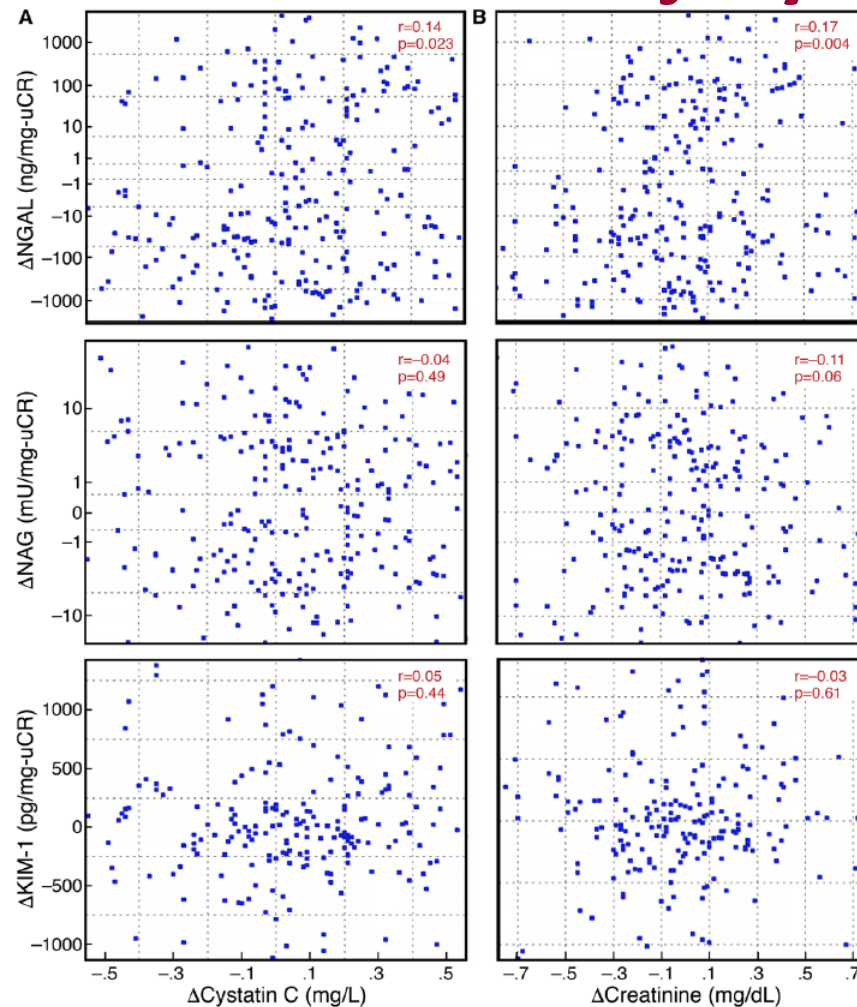


# Biomarkers of Renal Injury and Function in HF



B2M, b-2-microglobulin; BUN, blood urea nitrogen; FABP, fatty acid-binding protein (types L and H); KIM-1, kidney injury molecule 1; NAG, N-acetyl-b-d-glucosaminidase; NGAL, neutrophil gelatinase-associated lipocalin; NP, natriuretic peptide

# WRF in ADHF Undergoing Aggressive Diuresis; Not Tubular Injury

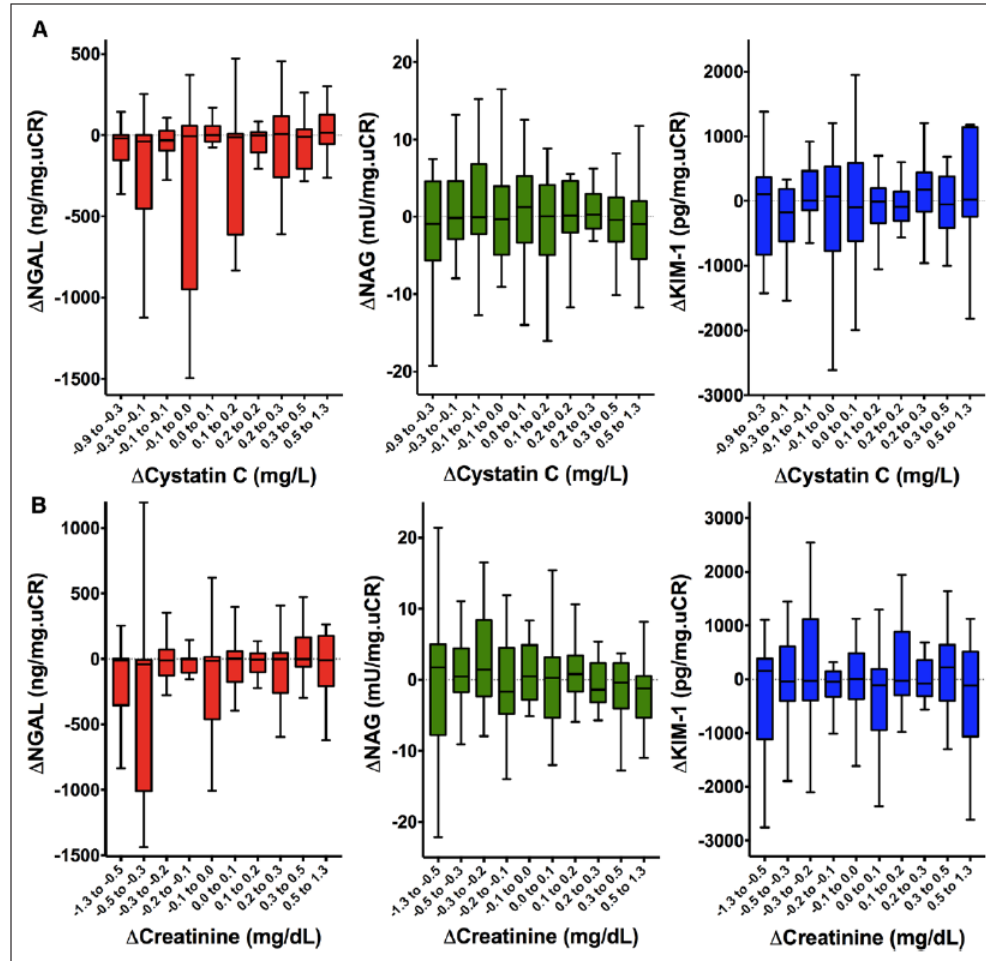


283 patients  
in ROSE-AHF

NAG and Kim-1 were not correlated with changes in cystatin C or SCr

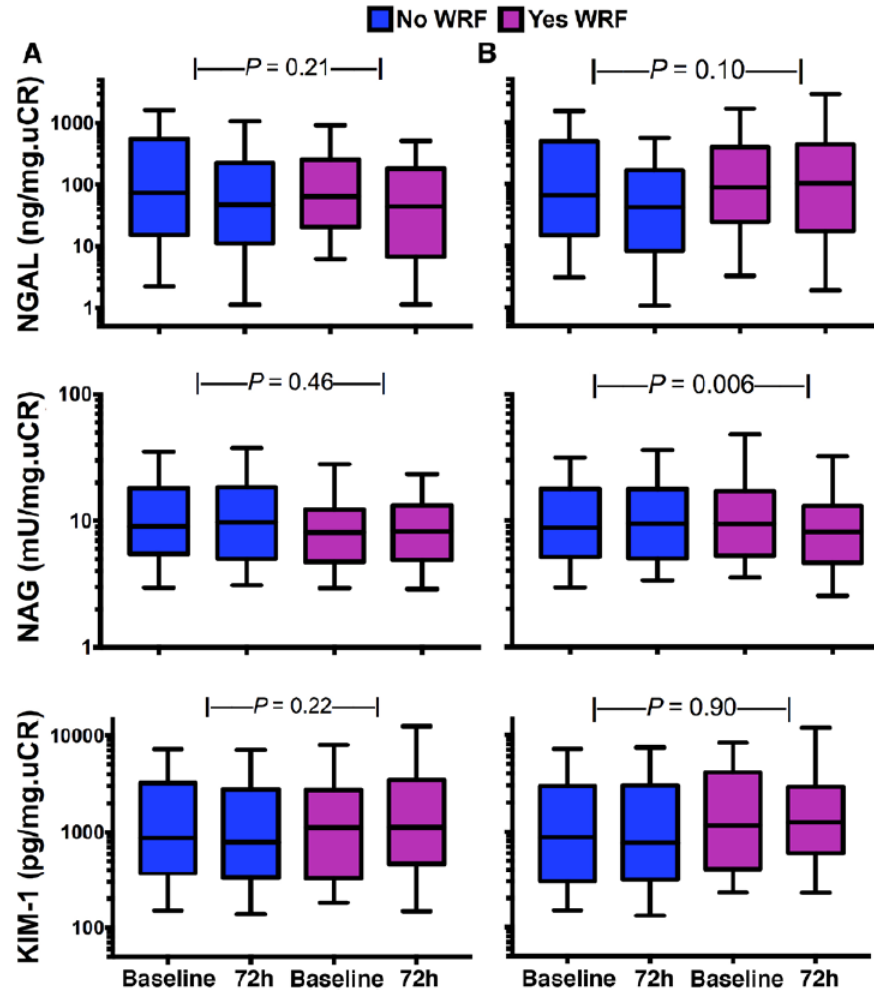
# WRF in ADHF Undergoing Aggressive Diuresis; Not Tubular Injury

283 patients  
in ROSE-AHF



No clear threshold or non-linear relationship between changes in  
Cystatin C and SCr with biomarkers of tubular injury

# WRF in ADHF Undergoing Aggressive Diuresis; Not Tubular Injury

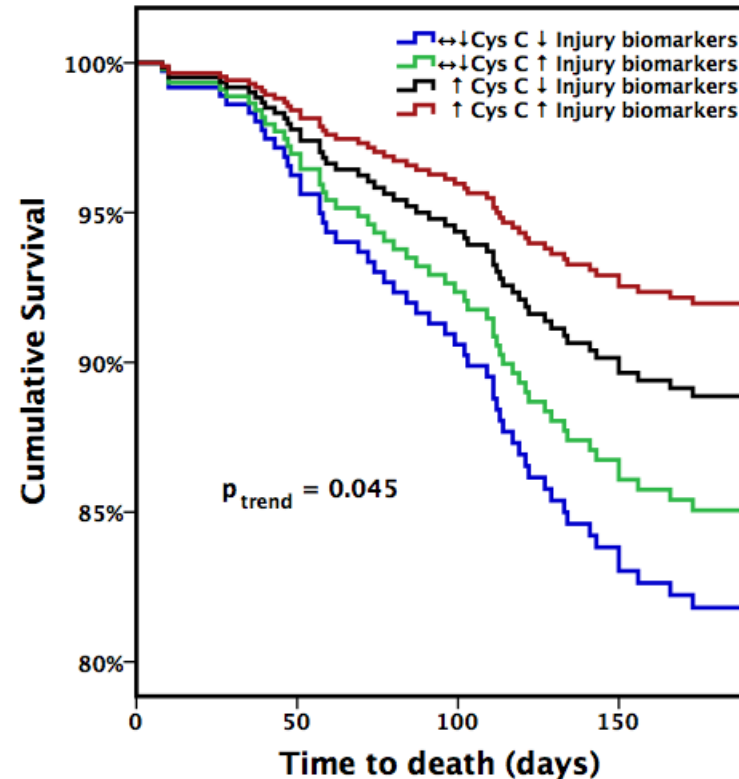


283 patients  
in ROSE-AHF

No difference in level of biomarkers between those with or without WRF  
(“reduction” in NAG among those with creatinine-based WRF)

# WRF in ADHF Undergoing Aggressive Diuresis; Impact on Survival

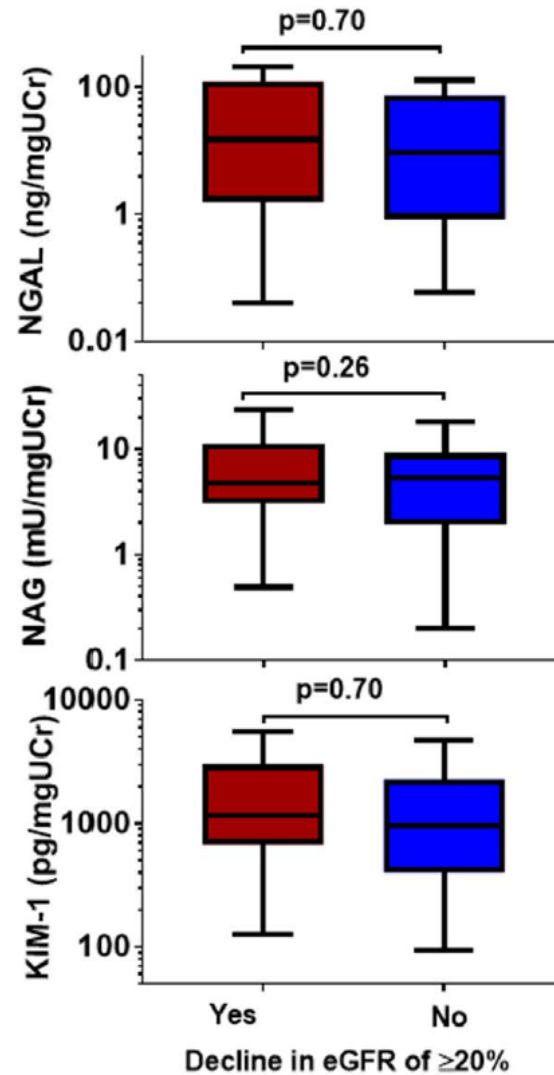
283 patients  
in ROSE-AHF



Decline in kidney function and increase in tubular injury markers; the best outcomes  
No change or improvement in kidney function/tubular injury biomarkers; the worst outcomes.

# WRF in ADHF Undergoing Aggressive Diuresis; Creatinine vs. Biomarkers

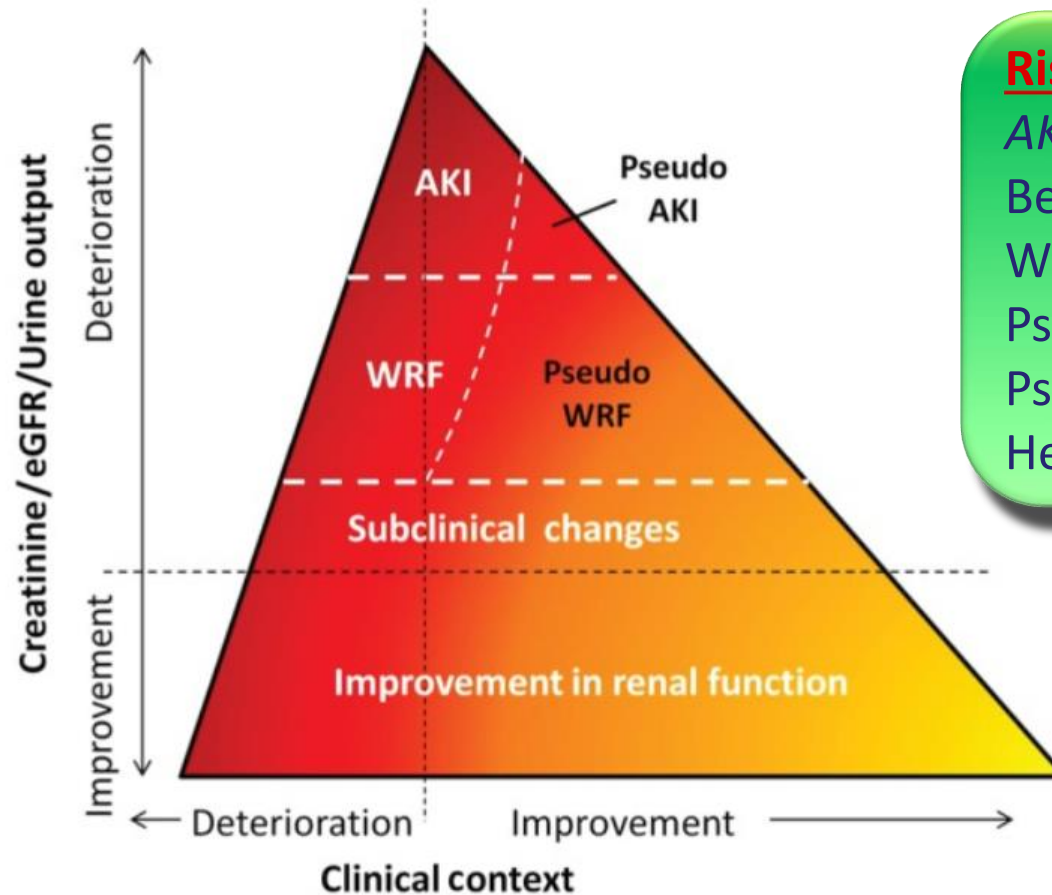
105 patients in  
CARRESS-HF



Lack of association between  
levels of the biomarkers  
between those with and without  
WRF ( $\geq 20\%$  reduction in eGFR).



# Good Endpoint for Renal Function in AHF: SCr-WRF-AKI?



## Rise in SCr

*AKI (tubular Injury)*

Benign AKI

WRF

PseudoAKI

PseudoWRF

Hemodynamic AKI

Darker colors indicate higher mortality risk. Suggested cut-off values for WRF (chronic HF):  $\geq 26.5$  mmol/L and  $\geq 25\%$  increase in creatinine OR  $\geq 20\%$  decrease in eGFR over 1–26 weeks, and AKI (acute HF): increase of 1.5–1.9 times baseline creatinine within 1–7 days before or during hospitalization OR  $\geq 26.5$  mmol/L increase in creatinine within 48 h OR urine output, 0.5 mL/kg/h for 6–12 h

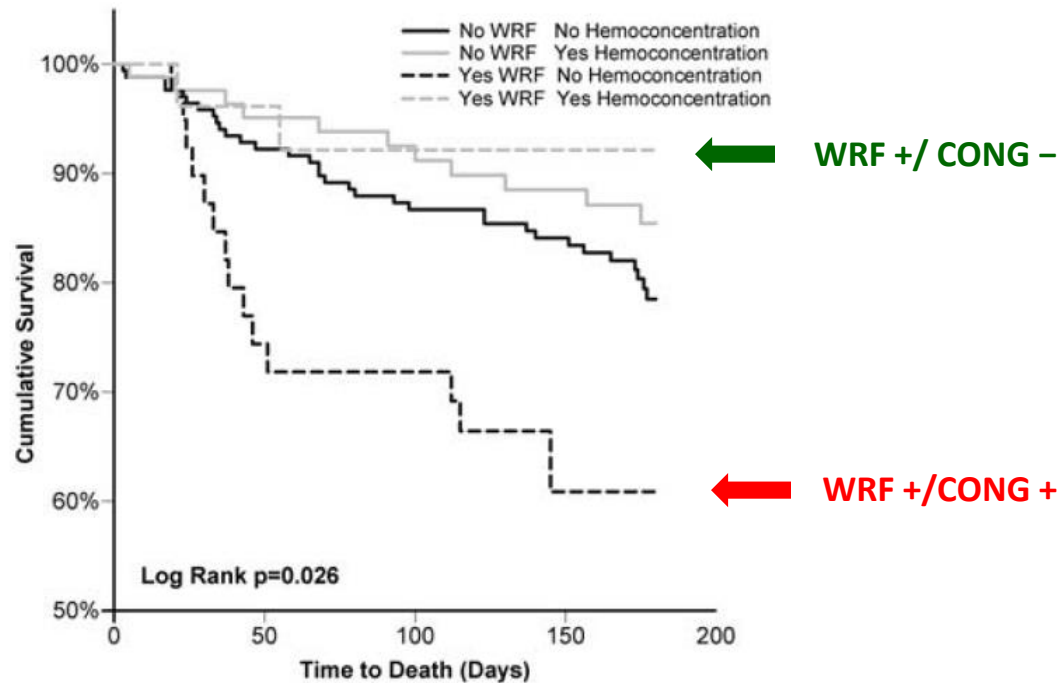


Maybe there is “something else” more important than Rise in Serum Creatinine that is driving the outcomes in AHF.

# A Confounding Factor?

# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

386  
patients



In ADHF , WRF is associated with adverse outcome only when congestion persists.

- 386 patients with ADHF (from the ESCAPE trial)
- Hemoconcentration (HC) defined as a change in hematocrit in the top tertile (low number of events if defined as  $\geq 2$  out of 3 (protein, albumin, and Hct))
- WRF:  $\geq 20\%$  reduction in eGFR
- Primary objective: to determine whether WRF was associated with in-hospital BP reduction
- In patients who experienced HC, WRF was not associated with mortality ( $p=0.429$ )
- WRF increased mortality if no HC ( $p=0.019$ )

[Testani JM. Eur J Heart Fail 2011; 13: 877]

# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

599  
patients

**Table 2. Predictors of Death**

Variable	25th, 75th Percentiles	Death or Transplant			
		Univariable HR (95% CI)*	Univariable <i>P</i> Value	Multivariable HR (95% CI)*	Multivariable <i>P</i> Value
Clinical history					
CKD		1.83 (1.2, 2.78)	0.005	1.79 (1.15, 2.79)	0.0104
COPD		2.04 (1.29, 3.21)	0.0021	1.87 (1.17, 3)	0.0088
Clinical characteristics					
NYHA class, discharge, 4 versus other		7.58 (3.31, 17.39)	<0.0001	5.48 (2.02, 14.89)	0.0009
Systolic blood pressure, admission	110, 140	0.53 (0.41, 0.7)	<0.0001	0.68 (0.52, 0.88)	0.0031
Systolic blood pressure, discharge	100, 125	0.4 (0.29, 0.56)	<0.0001		
Heart rate, discharge	60, 75	1.99 (1.53, 2.59)	<0.0001	1.48 (1.14, 1.92)	0.0032
Weight, discharge	65.6, 82	0.69 (0.53, 0.89)	0.0051	0.72 (0.55, 0.93)	0.0108
Echocardiographic characteristics					
EF, admission	23, 41	0.73 (0.54, 0.98)	0.038		
Laboratory characteristics					
Plasma hemoglobin, discharge	11.2, 14	0.6 (0.42, 0.84)	0.0035		
Serum sodium admission	137, 141	0.6 (0.5, 0.73)	<0.0001		
Serum sodium, discharge†	137, 142	0.48 (0.27, 0.86)	<0.0001	0.69 (0.37, 1.3)	<0.0001
Congestion and WRF					
1: Yes WRF and yes congestion		5.35 (3, 9.55)	<0.0001	2.44 (1.24, 4.81)	0.0097
2: No WRF and yes congestion		1.95 (0.81, 4.7)	0.1364	1.35 (0.52, 3.5)	0.5324
3: Yes WRF and no congestion		1.24 (0.75, 2.03)	0.4037	1.04 (0.62, 1.73)	0.8811
Reference: No WRF and no congestion			Ref		Ref

In ADHF , WRF is associated with adverse outcome only when congestion persists.

# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

599  
patients

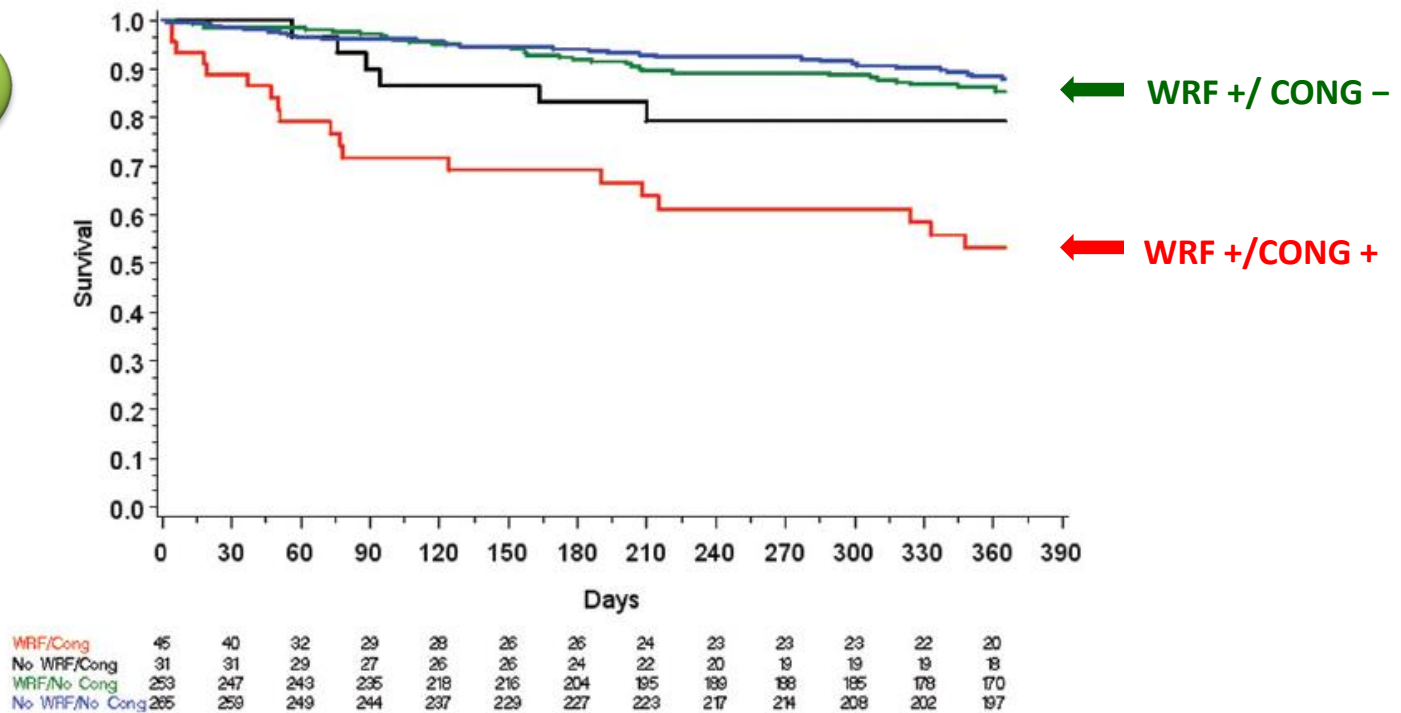
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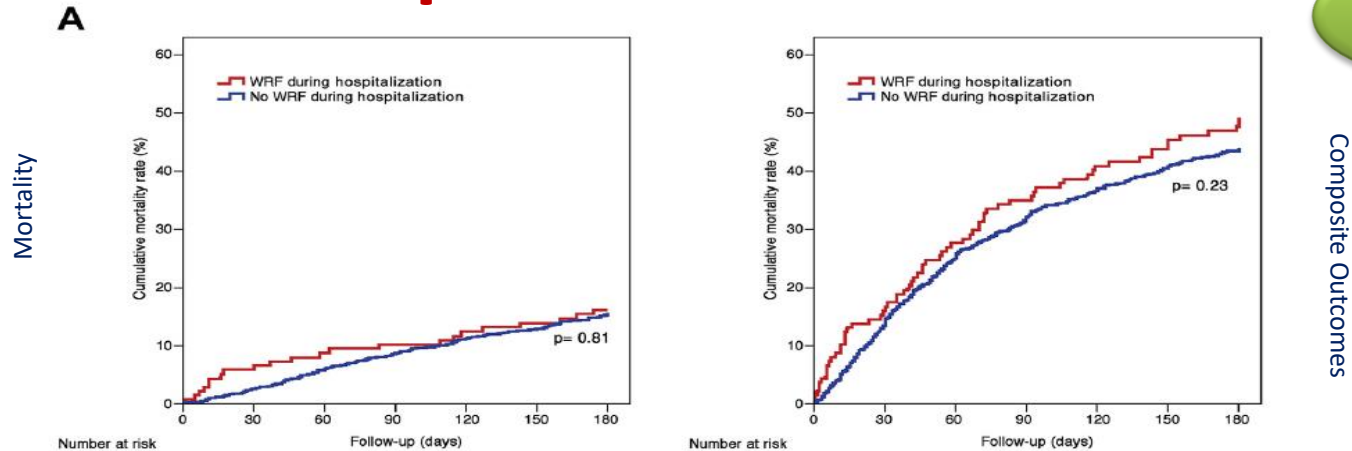
599  
patients



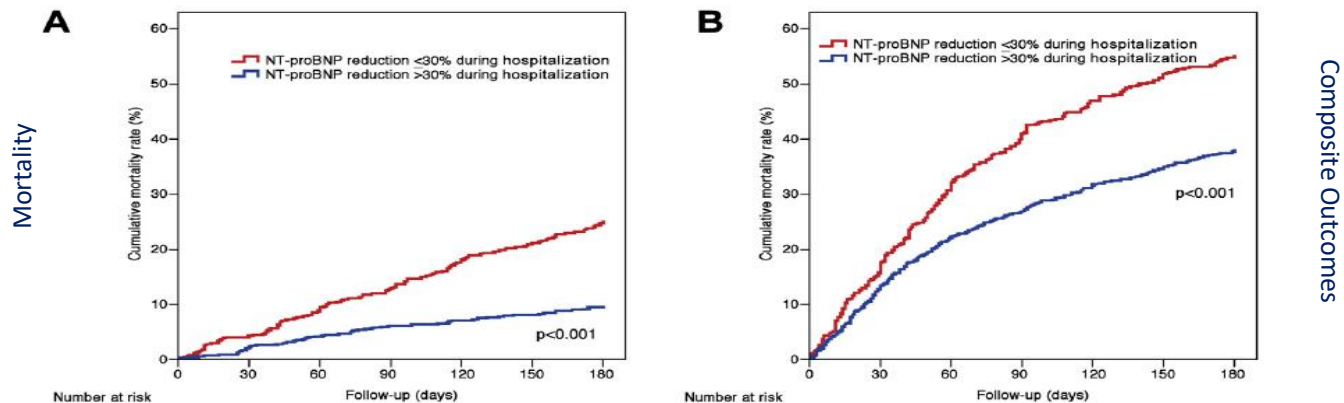
Endpoints: 1 year death or urgent transplantation

# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

1232  
patients



**FIGURE 2** Kaplan-Meier Curves for NT-proBNP During Hospitalization

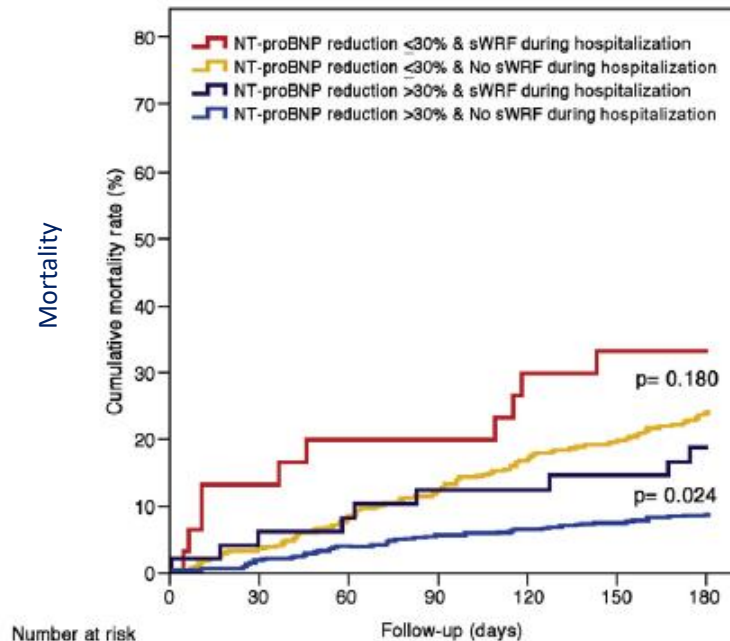


Persistent congestion, but not WRF, was associated with adverse outcomes

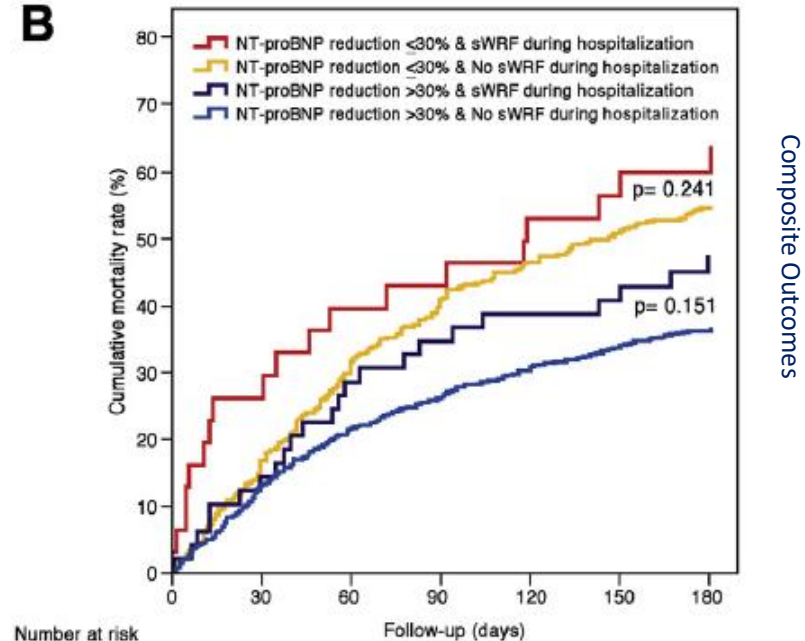
# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

1232  
patients

A



B



Adverse outcomes are mainly driven by persistent congestion

# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

3715  
patients

EVEREST  
ad hoc

Decline in eGFR is Associated With  
Higher Risk When Interpreted Alone

Decline in  
eGFR

HR: 1.19 [95% CI: 1.07  
-1.31] per every 30%  
decline

0.6 0.9 1.2 1.6 2.2  
Adjusted Hazard Ratio for Death

Decline in BNP (Decongestion) and Increase in  
Hematocrit (Hemoconcentration) are Associated  
With Lower Risk When Interpreted Alone

Decline in  
BNP

HR: 0.78 [95% CI:  
0.72-0.84] per halving

Increase in  
Hematocrit

HR: 0.89 [95% CI:  
0.84-0.95] per every 3%  
increase

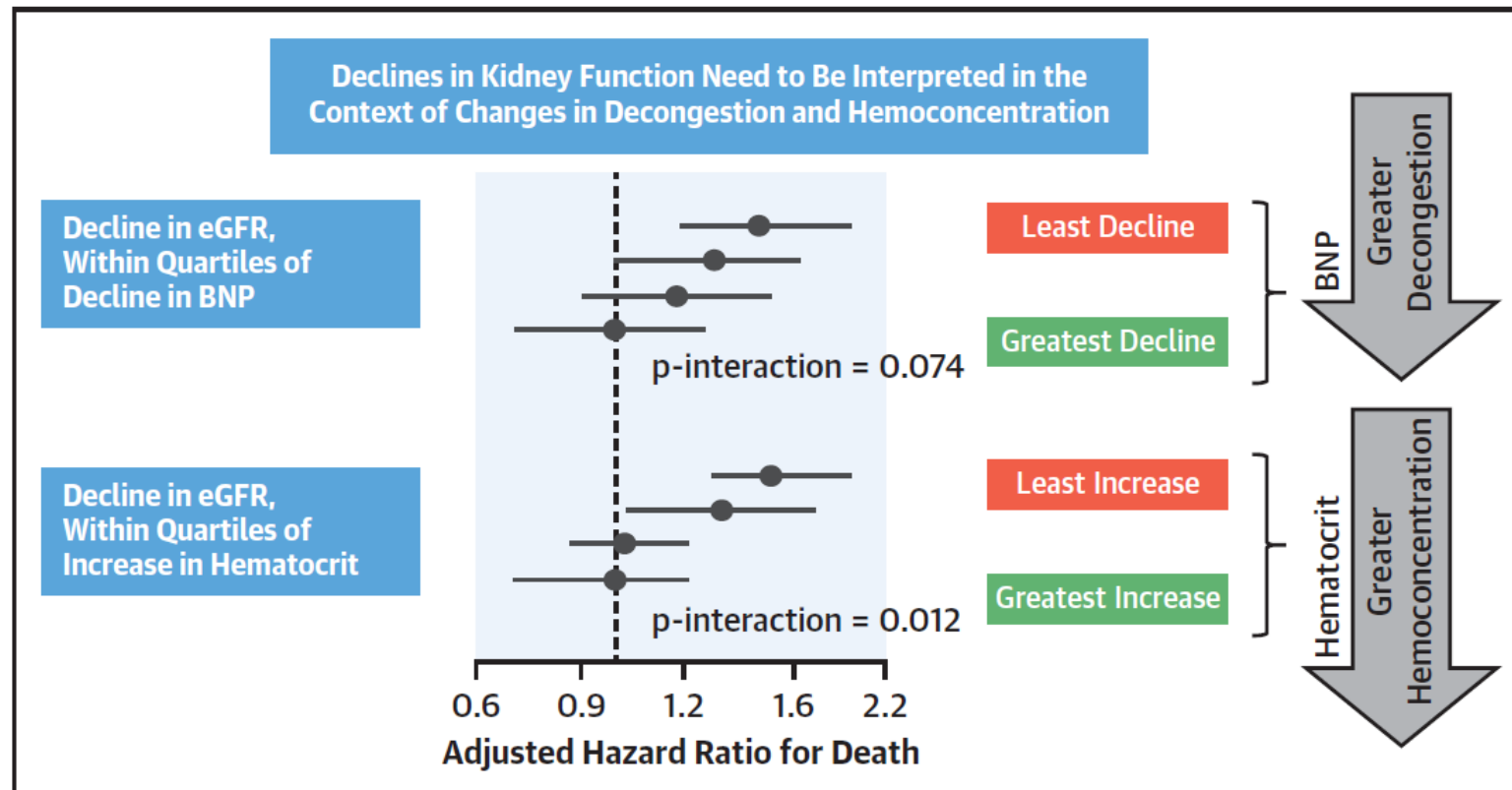
0.6 0.9 1.2 1.6 2.2  
Adjusted Hazard Ratio for Death



# Congestion Modulates the Impact of ↑Scr in ADHF

3715  
patients

EVEREST  
ad hoc



Blood  
Purification

## Editorial

Blood Purif  
DOI: 10.1159/000500409

Published online: June 19, 2019

# Are We Barking Up the Wrong Tree? Rise in Serum Creatinine and Heart Failure

Amir Kazory<sup>a</sup> Claudio Ronco<sup>b, c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Division of Nephrology, Hypertension, and Renal Transplantation, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA;

<sup>b</sup>Department of Nephrology, San Bortolo Hospital, Vicenza, Italy; <sup>c</sup>International Renal Research Institute of Vicenza, San Bortolo Hospital, Vicenza, Italy



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European Heart Journal (2011) 32, 2476–2478  
doi:10.1093/eurheartj/ehr242

EDITORIAL

## Worsening kidney function in decompensated heart failure: treat the heart, don't mind the kidney

Piero Ruggenti<sup>1,2</sup> and Giuseppe Remuzzi<sup>1,2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mario Negri Institute for Pharmacological Research, Bergamo, Italy; and <sup>2</sup>Unit of Nephrology, Azienda Ospedaliera Ospedali Riuniti, Bergamo, Italy

Amir Kazory<sup>a</sup> Claudio Ronco<sup>b, c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Division of Nephrology, Hypertension, and Renal Transplantation, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA;

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European Heart Journal (2011) 32, 2476–2478  
doi:10.1093/eurheartj/ehr242

EDITORIAL

online: June 19, 2019

THE AMERICAN  
JOURNAL of  
MEDICINE®



# The Congestion-Creatinine Interplay in Acute Heart Failure: Time to Move Up to the Next Level

March 2020

Amir Kazory

*Division of Nephrology, Hypertension, and Renal Transplantation, University of Florida, Gainesville*

# Take-Home Message

- ✓ - Changes in SCr do not necessarily reflect tubular injury (AKI) in HF.
- ✓ - While renal biomarkers are promising, their therapeutic implications in HF are yet to be clarified.
- ✓ - Congestion is the main reason for hospital admission and the driver of outcomes in ADHF.
- ✓ - If renal function is used as an endpoint, it needs to be considered along with measures of decongestion (CARRESS-HF)





از توجهتون سپاسگزار هستم ...

***Thank You...***