Reviewer's report

Title: Role of Echocardiography in Diagnosis and Risk Stratification in Heart Failure with Left Ventricular Systolic Dysfunction

Version: 1 Date: 20 July 2007

Reviewer: Luna Gargani

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a useful, well-written paper on the role of echocardiography in heart failure with left ventricular systolic dysfunction. The authors propose a more complete, integrated echographic approach to the evaluation of patients with systolic dysfunction, based not only on the classical, well-established but limited aspect represented by the ejection fraction, but also on many other echographic signs that have shown to provide important information for stratification of these patients. This "pan-echographic" approach may be useful to differentiate patients that may be seem similar but, if observed with more tools, show important differences that may need distinct diagnostic and therapeutic solutions.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
-Page 1, line 2: reference 1 may be updated to Braunwald 7th edition.
-Page 2, line 13: the sentence should end with period.
-Page 7, line 6: the sentence should end with period.
-Page 8, line 2: after "In fact" period should be deleted.
-Page 9, line 11: the syntax of the sentence beginning with "Patients with presence..." is not very clear.
-Page 10, line 1: "LV filling consists series" should be "LV filling consists in a series".
-Page 11: the proposal of a grading system for the severity of diastolic dysfunction, integrating echo and clinical information, is very interesting, but perhaps grade IV is irreversible restrictive filling pattern, and not reversible, that characterises grade III.
-Page 14, line 14: the subject of "were more powerful" (ultrasound lung comets) should be added.
- Page 14, line 17: "ultrasound" should be in capital letter.
- Page 16, line 1: delete the first "was".
- Page 16, line 19: "peak exercise" is repeated twice.
- Page 17, line 11: "is related a bad" should be "is related to a bad".
- Page 17, line 16: "it is very important analyzed" should be "it is very important to analyze".
- Page 18, line 7: "identify" should be "identifies".
- Table 1: regarding ULCs score, you have correctly used the score proposed in Picano et al. JASE 2006;16:139-146 but, to avoid doubts, I would put moderate 16-30, instead of 15-30.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.