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## Valvular heart disease and the older adult

Valvular heart disease (VHD) constitutes a pathologic process affecting cardiac output, direction of blood flow through the heart and pooling of blood around the valves. These conditions are precursors to poor tissue perfusion, peripheral edema, pulmonary edema and emboli, all of which can cause cardiovascular and cerebrovascular complications. A gap in the care of patients with these conditions is the lack of accurate auscultation of heart sounds. Due to increasing life-expectancy in the United States and prevalence of obesity VHD is expected to become a cardiac epidemic needing early detection to evaluate and minimize adverse effects on heart function. The purpose of the discussion will be to cultivate higher expectations in healthcare for cardiovascular surveillance through cardiac auscultation and by other means, facilitating early detection and prevention of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular complications in the older adult. Data collections on cardiac murmurs and subsequent nursing documentation revealed a significant skill deficit in cardiac auscultation in nursing and readily corrected with an educational in-service. The discussion will also include the various therapy options and the quality of life for the older adult with valvular heart disease.

## Biography

Julianne Wright has completed her DNP this past spring from the University of Southern Indiana. She is an Assistant Nursing Professor from the University of Indianapolis in Indiana. Her research has focused on improving assessment skills in nursing, improving the surveillance for significant findings and best patient outcomes. She has over 30-years' experience in critical care and medical-surgical nursing at the bedside and working closely with adult patients and the older adult.

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