Infective Endocarditis

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Introduction

- Infective endocarditis (IE) is a severe inflammatory disease of the endocardium, affecting valve structure and function.
- IE develops when bacteria or fungi in the blood attach to the surface of the heart (Pierce et al., 2012).
- If left untreated, IE will likely cause congestive heart failure, leading to death.
- It is important for health care professionals to understand the causes, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and treatment of IE in order to adequately intervene and care for their patients.

This topic was chosen as a result of research and work required by patients who suffer from the illness in a pediatric cardiology intensive care unit. Six months ago, a teenager without any prior heart history was diagnosed with IE. Literature states that more than one-half of IE cases now occur in patients without any prior heart disease (Gallagher et al., 2017). The patient was placed on a left ventricular assist device (LVAD) and then received a heart transplant. With multiple different antibiotics, including an aggressive fungal infection that led to multi-system organ failure, the patient did not live. This patient, along with many others affected by IE, led to a more in-depth research of IE.