

Atrioventricular septal defect (ASVD) is a general term for a group of rare heart defects that are present at birth (congenital). Infants with ASVDs have improperly developed atrial and ventricular septa and adjoining valves. The diagnosis of atrioventricular septal defect can be made by imaging techniques of the heart such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and echocardiogram (EC). In another procedure known as a cardiac catheterization, a long fine tube (catheter) is inserted into a large vein and then channeled directly into the heart. This allows the physician to determine the extent of the defect (i.e., complete, transitional, or incomplete) and to determine the rate of blood flow through the heart. Angiography is another useful diagnostic procedure and allows the physician to view an enhanced x-ray of the heart. Children with ASVD typically have an abnormal EKG reading.