Left ventricular assist devices aid survival, quality of life in elderly

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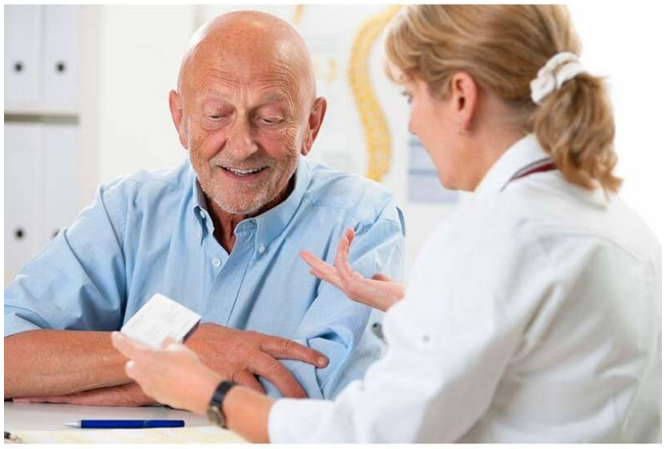

(HealthDay)—Elderly heart failure patients gain quality-of-life benefits with left ventricular assist devices (LVAD), according to a study published in the Aug. 31 issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

Dominic Emerson, M.D., from the Smidt Heart Institute at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles, and colleagues evaluated survival, functional outcomes, and quality of life after LVAD. Data from the Interagency Registry for Mechanically Assisted Circulatory Support was used to identify 24,408 adult patients receiving durable LVADs between Jan. 1, 2010, and March 1, 2020.

The researchers found that mortality of 34 percent was seen for patients 75 years of age. There was an association observed between newer-generation devices and reduced late mortality (hazard ratio [HR], 0.35). With increasing age, stroke, device malfunction or thrombosis, and rehospitalizations decreased. In all ages, median 6-minute walk distance increased from 0 feet to 1,065 feet, and quality of life improved after LVAD.

"We hope these findings increase awareness of this great option for elderly heart-failure patients who may not be candidates for heart transplant," a coauthor said in a statement. "Furthermore, our research confirms our clinical experience that newer-generation LVADs can be transformative for patients who have exhausted other heart-failure treatment options."

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