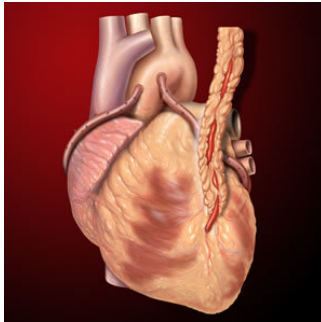

Survival Rate Better Among Patients who have Bypass Surgery



An international study shows that heart-failure patients with clogged arteries have a better chance of surviving 10 years if they have bypass surgery plus medicine as compared to medicine alone. 10-year results are published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and have also been presented at the American College of Cardiology meeting in Chicago.

Previous results from the same research had raised questions with respect to the benefits of bypass surgery versus medicine alone. Researchers now say that the long-term evidence clearly shows that surgery helps improve survival.

Duke University cardiologist Eric Velazquez, lead author of this study explains that the results are definitive and robust and would definitely lead to stronger recommendation for bypass surgery. Approximately 6 million Americans and 23 million people worldwide suffer from heart failure. Many also have artery disease. Recommendation for bypass surgery have increased in the recent years as well as the use of medicines to ease heart-failure symptoms.

Results after five years of research were published in 2011 and showed an equal number of deaths in bypass patients and in those who received only medicine. 1200 heart failure patients were involved and all were taking heart medicines. Half were assigned to have bypass surgery.

The 10-year results look back at the patients studied and found that 359 bypass patients died from any cause compared with 398 medicine-only patients. Deaths from heart-disease related causes totaled 247 in the bypass group as compared to 297 in the medicine-only group.

In an editorial on the study, it was said that the results provide support for bypass surgery since the long-term results with surgery plus medicine are very encouraging.

Source: New England Journal of Medicine
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