

Second patient dies in France's artificial heart trial

May 4 2015

The second person in France to receive a much-hyped new-generation artificial heart has died eight months after receiving the transplant, biomedical firm Carmat said Tuesday.

The 69-year-old man, who wished to remain anonymous, was terminally ill when he received the experimental [heart](#) that was seen as a long-term solution for [patients](#) with end-stage [heart failure](#).

Carmat, which designed what it calls the world's most-advanced artificial heart, said the patient was admitted to hospital on Friday with "circulatory collapse".

A medical team noted the heart was not functioning correctly and transplanted a new device, however the patient died on Saturday from post-operative complications.

Artificial hearts have been in use for many years as a temporary fix for patients with chronic heart problems.

However Carmat hopes to provide a longer-term solution to tens of thousands who suffer from [heart disease](#)—the world's leading cause of death—and are unable to receive a transplant.

The device, a self-contained unit implanted in a patient's chest, is a mix of synthetic materials and animal tissue, and seeks to mimic the form and function of an actual [human heart](#).

The artificial heart uses soft biomaterials intended to lessen the risk of blood clots and rejection by the immune system. It is powered by a belt of lithium batteries.

Carmat's first trial of the device on a 76-year-old man ended March 2 with the patient's death after two and a half months.

The second patient said in an interview with French media a month ago that he had "recovered" to the point of going on bike rides.

Nearly 100,000 people in Europe and the United States are in need of a [heart transplant](#), according to Carmat, but only about 4,000 hearts become available for transplant.

The French firm's trial was to involve four people. A third patient was confirmed to have received their [artificial heart](#) last week.

The first phase of the trial will be considered a success if patients survive for a month after the transplant. Carmat will then carry out a second phase of clinical trials which will involve 20 patients.

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