

No association between sex-discordant blood transfusions and risk of death

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New research from Karolinska Institutet refutes the findings of a previous study indicating a possible higher risk of death after sex-discordant blood transfusions for cardiac surgery.

In a study published in the journal *Circulation* researchers from Karolinska Institutet and Lund University examined how sex-discordant blood transfusions (i.e. blood from a woman to a man or vice versa) affected survival following [cardiac surgery](#). The study was conducted on data from the SWEDEHEART registry and the SCANDAT2 database on almost 50,000 patients who underwent cardiac surgery from 1997 to 2012 in Sweden.

This study was done after a previous Swedish study from earlier in the year indicated a possible increased [risk](#) of death after cardiac surgery from sex-discordant blood transfusions.

"The consequences of the findings from this first study, if proved true, would have been immense and necessitated radical changes to how blood transfusions are managed around the world," says Martin Holzmann from Karolinska Institutet.

In the new study, however, the team found no association between sex-discordant blood transfusions and post-cardiac surgery survival.

Martin Holzmann, lead author of the new study continues:

"Our results clearly show that there is no real connection between sex-discordant blood transfusions and the risk of death."

The reason for the difference between the studies is that the new one fully compensated for the fact that more transfusions increase the risk of [death](#) and of a mismatch between the sex of the donor and the patient. The researchers conclude from their results that current gender-blind blood transfusion procedures are safe and do not need changing.

More information: Martin J. Holzmann et al, Sex-Discordant Blood Transfusions and Survival After Cardiac Surgery: Table., *Circulation* (2016). [DOI: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.116.025087](https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.116.025087)

Provided by Karolinska Institutet

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