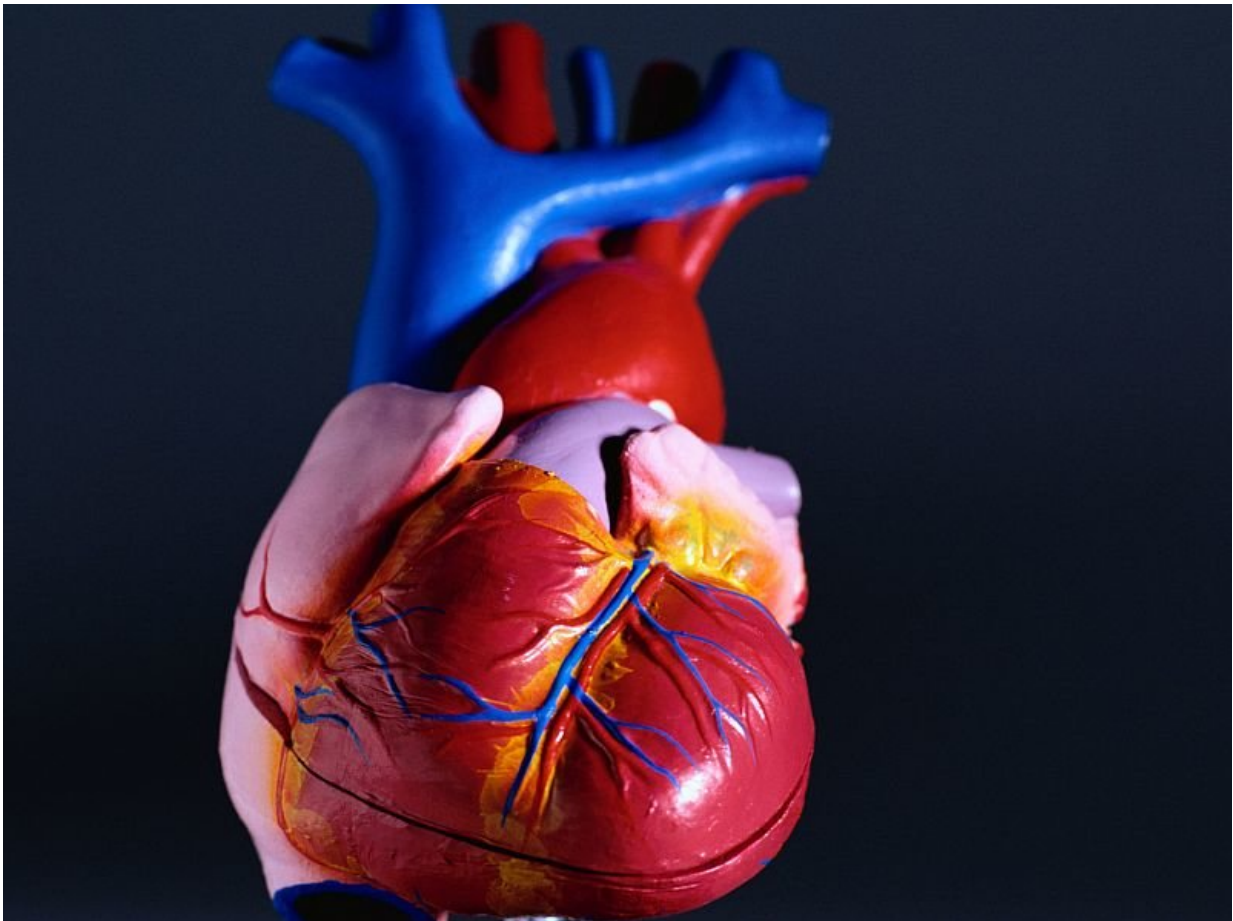


Patient, caregiver characteristics predict LVAD response

March 8 2018



(HealthDay)—For patients receiving left ventricular assist device

(LVAD) therapy and their caregivers, patient and caregiver characteristics predict response, according to a study published online March 7 in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*.

Julie T. Bidwell, Ph.D., R.N., from the Oregon Health and Science University School of Nursing in Portland, and colleagues examined patient and [caregiver](#) determinants of patient quality of life (QOL) and caregiver strain in response to LVAD therapy. Data were obtained for 50 [patients](#) receiving LVAD therapy and their caregivers and were prospectively collected pre-implantation and at one, three, and six months post-implantation.

The researchers found that the greatest improvement in patient QOL was seen in the first month and was followed by gradual gains over six months. In the first month, caregivers experienced worsening of strain, followed by gradual resolution to pre-implantation levels by six months. There was a correlation for worse pre-implantation patient symptoms with greater improvement in patient QOL but with worsening caregiver strain. There was also a correlation for better relationship quality with greater improvement in patient QOL and less pre-implantation caregiver strain. Less pre-implantation strain was seen for non-spousal caregivers; less improvement in QOL was seen for patients with non-spousal caregivers.

"Including caregiver factors in future studies may be helpful in developing interventions that improve patient and caregiver outcomes, together," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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Citation: Patient, caregiver characteristics predict LVAD response (2018, March 8) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-03-patient-caregiver-characteristics-lvad-response.html>

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