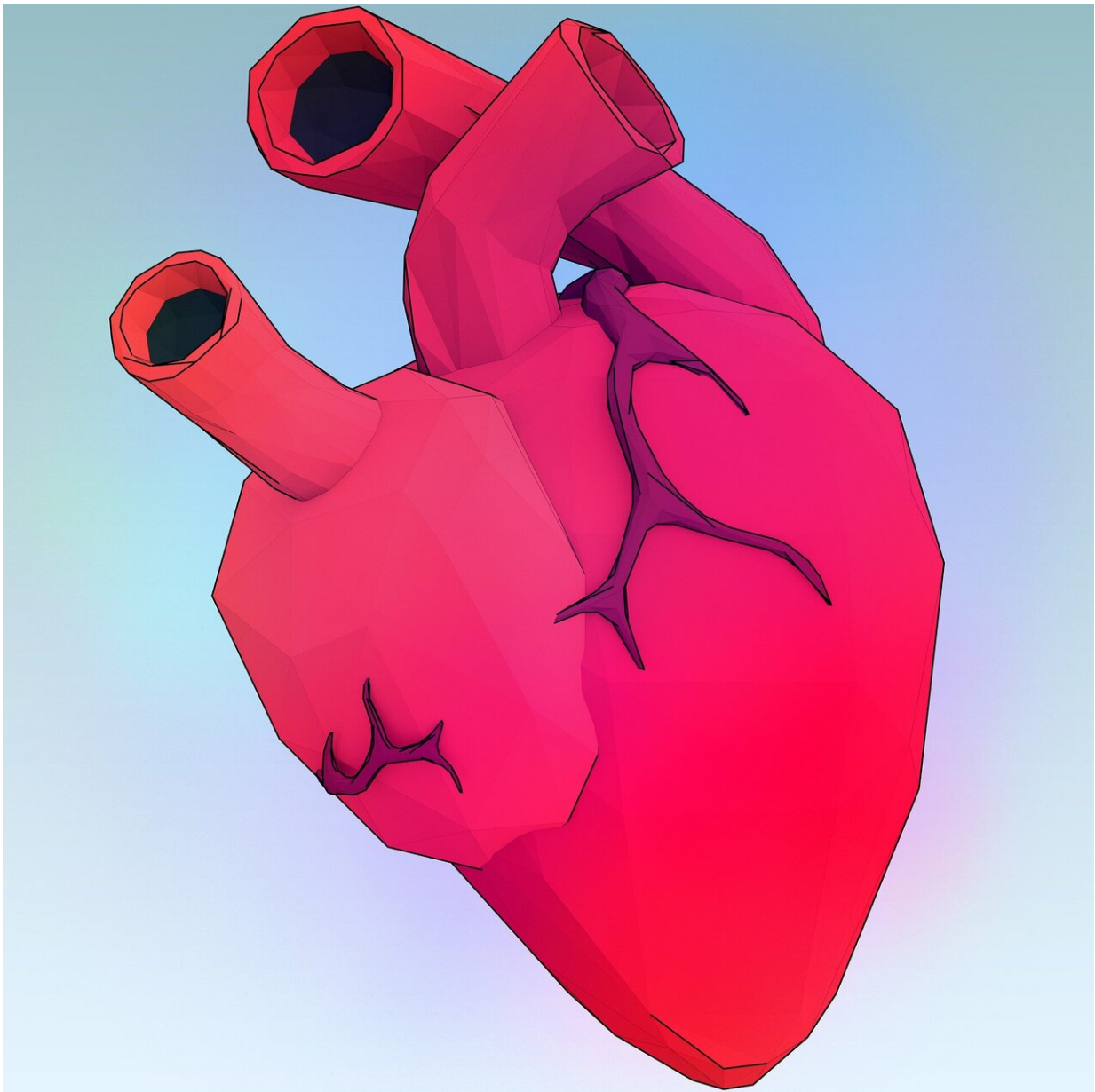


After heart attack, home health care could help prevent return to hospital

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Heart attack survivors who receive home health care are less likely to be readmitted to the hospital within the first month, according to preliminary research.

The study, presented Friday at the American Heart Association's Quality of Care & Outcomes Research Scientific Sessions, used the Nationwide Readmission Database to identify more than 400,000 people who were treated for a heart attack and discharged from the hospital either with or without [home health care](#).

In the United States, only a small percentage of patients receive home health care after a heart attack, and they are typically older, women or have underlying [health conditions](#). Home health care can include nursing support and physical therapy.

"Since patients who receive home health care tend to be older and sicker than others, and these characteristics themselves can lead to hospital readmission, we wanted to investigate the impact of home health care alone on readmission," lead researcher Muhammad Adil Sheikh said in a news release. He is a clinical assistant professor and hospitalist at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor.

The study found 9.4%, or 38,215 patients, received home health care. They tended to be older—77 on average compared to 60 for patients who did not receive home health care. They also were more likely to have diabetes, heart failure, [chronic lung disease](#), chronic kidney disease and high blood pressure. But after adjusting for those conditions, home care patients were 11% less likely to be readmitted to a hospital within 30 days of their initial discharge.

"Since hospital readmissions are costly due to the expenses associated with hospitalization, using home health care after discharge for [heart attack](#) patients can reduce health care costs for patients and medical systems," Sheikh said. "This service should be utilized more often to potentially reduce hospital readmission rates."

More information: Muhammad A Sheikh et al. Abstract 107: Home Health Care After Discharge is Associated With Less Early Readmissions for Patients With Acute Myocardial Infarction, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* (2020). DOI: [10.1161/hcq.13.suppl_1.107](https://doi.org/10.1161/hcq.13.suppl_1.107)

Provided by American Heart Association

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