

## **Sexual Dysfunction among Patients Supported with Left Ventricular Assist Device and among Patients after Heart Transplant**

Tal Hasin<sup>1</sup>, Viky Yaari<sup>1</sup>, Daniel Murninkas<sup>1</sup>, Simona Bar-Yosef<sup>1</sup>, Benjamin Medalion<sup>2</sup>,  
Tuvia Ben Gal<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Cardiology, Rabin Medical Center, Israel*

<sup>2</sup>*Cardiac Surgery, Rabin Medical Center, Israel*

### **Background:**

Sexual dysfunction is common among patients with heart failure. While advanced heart failure therapies such as heart transplant (HTx) and implantation of Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) improve quality of life, their influence on sexual function is unknown.

### **Aims:**

To evaluate the sexual function among patients with advanced heart failure therapies.

### **Results:**

We surveyed 20 consecutive stable patients, 9 after HTx and 11 post LVAD implantation with a validated sexual activity questionnaire. Comparisons were performed by Wilcoxon or Chi<sup>2</sup> test as appropriate. Age was 59±10 years, 80% were males, 65% had diabetes and 65% had hypertension. NYHA class>2 was reported in 45% of the patients (54% with LVAD and 33% post HTx). Two HTx and 4 LVAD patients reported lack of interest in sex. Three HTx and 4 LVAD patients reported a significant problem with sexual activity while an improvement since the operation was reported in 3 Htx and 4 LVAD patients. A problem in performing sex was reported in 3 HTx patients and in 7 patients after LVAD (4 with significant problems). Reasons listed for sexual disturbance included problems with LVAD machinery (4 patients), fear of injury (3), feeling depressed (3), problem with orgasm (3), erectile dysfunction or dryness (3), weakness (2), lack of partner's compliance and problem of self-image (1 each). Overall satisfaction of the sexual life on a scale of 0-10 (best) was highly variant among patients. Six reported less than average sexual satisfaction of which 5 deteriorated or did not improve after the surgery, 14 reported better than average sexual satisfaction, of these 10 improved or had no change in their sexual satisfaction since surgery.

### **Conclusion:**

Sexual dysfunction may improve in most patients undergoing HTx and LVAD implantation. The causes limiting improvement are multifactorial.