

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

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- No Disclosures

WE DO
WHAT?!



Sex is an important part of life

- For reproduction
- For couple relations
- For self image and esteem
- For pleasure

Complexity

- Interest
- Partner
- Physical fitness
- Sexual ability

HF and sex

- Sexual function is impaired among patients with heart failure
- Advanced HF therapies such as LVAD and heart transplant prolong and improve quality of life

Aim

To evaluate sexual function among patients with advanced heart failure therapies

Methods

- Advanced HF clinic (LVAD+HTx)
- At least 1 month after surgery, in “stable” medical condition
- Validated sexual activity questionnaire current status & comparisons to pre-operative condition
- Satisfaction with sex-life rated by a visual analogue scale from 0-10
- Nurse/physician supervision

Results

- No refusals
- 11/2012 to 2/2013
- 31 patients, 11 LVAD and 20 HTx.

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Variable	All(n=31)	LVAD (n=11)	HTx (n=20)	p
Age (years)	58±12	61±8	56±14	0.590
Male	27 (87%)	9 (82%)	18 (90%)	0.601
Diabetes mellitus	13 (42%)	2 (18%)	11 (55%)	0.066
Hypertension	10 (32%)	5 (45%)	5 (25%)	0.423
Ischemic etiology	22 (71%)	9 (82%)	13 (65%)	0.429
Time from operation months, median (IQR)	32 (13;70)	14 (6;29)	62 (20;98)	0.003*

Relevant medications

Variable	All(n=31)	LVAD (n=11)	HTx (n=20)	p
Beta blockers	19 (61%)	8 (73%)	11 (55%)	0.452
ACEI or ARB	20 (64%)	9 (82%)	11 (55%)	0.241
Loop diuretic	12 (39%)	7 (64%)	5 (25%)	0.564
Alpha blocker	4 (13%)	2 (18%)	2 (10%)	0.601
PDE5 inhibitor	5 (16%)	5 (45%)	0 (0%)	0.003*
Aldospirone	4 (13%)	4 (36%)	0 (0%)	0.010*

Functional status

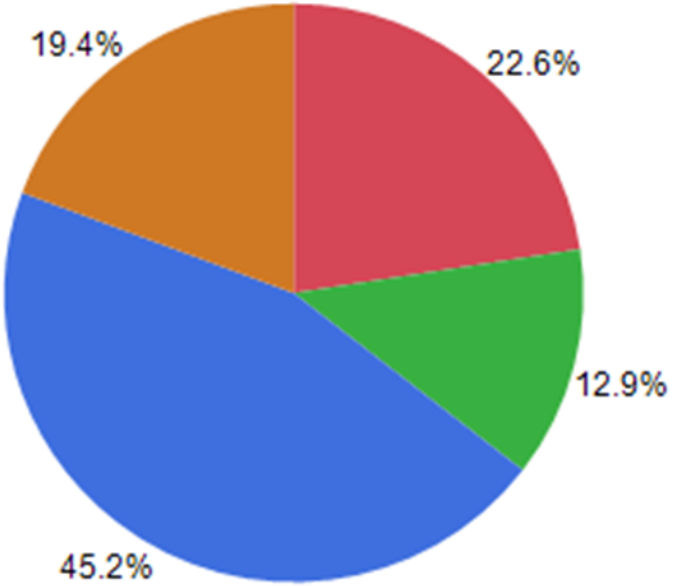
Variable	All(n=31)	LVAD (n=11)	HTx (n=20)	p
NYHA class>II	11 (35%)	6(54%)	5 (25%)	0.132
Unemployed	24 (77%)	10 (91%)	14 (70%)	0.372
Stable partner	27 (87%)	10 (91%)	17 (85%)	1.000

John William Waterhouse
Pandora, 1896



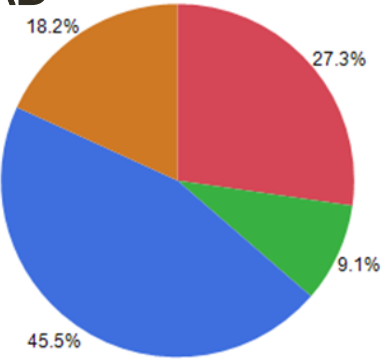
Change in sexual function since the operation

All patients

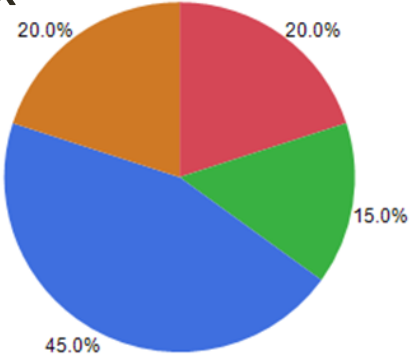


- Major improvement
- Minor improvement
- No change
- Deterioration

LVAD

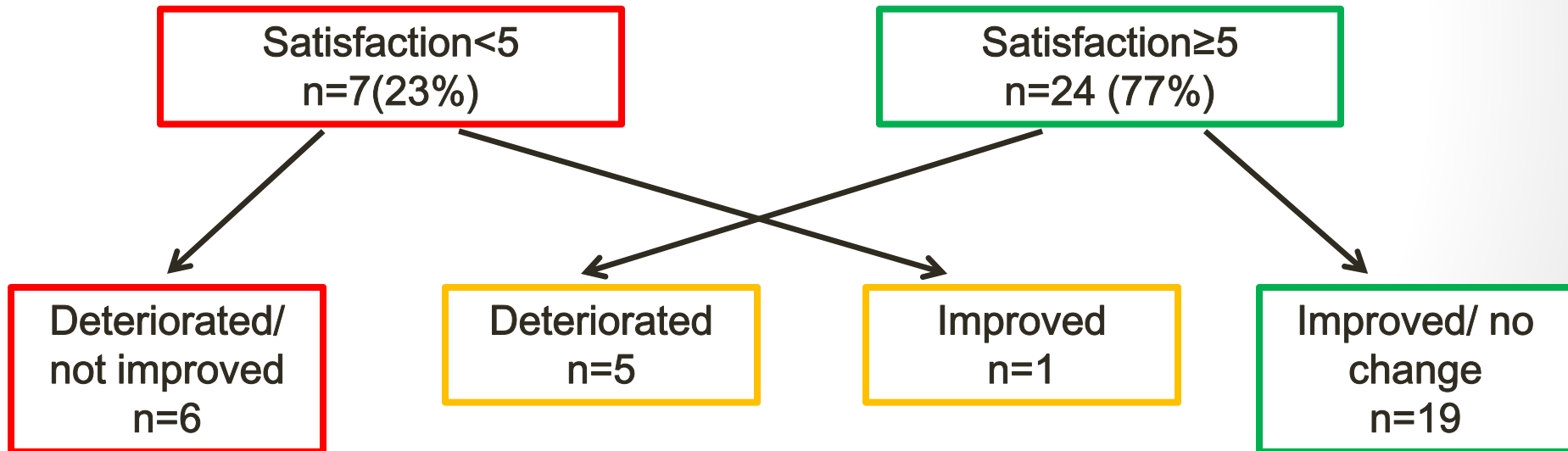


HTx



Satisfaction with sex-life

Variable	All(n=31)	LVAD (n=11)	HTx (n=20)	P
Satisfaction with sex-life (0-10 scale)	6.6±3.3	5.5±3.5	7.2±3.2	0.182



Sexuality for patients with LVAD compared to HTx

Variable (1 better to 4 worse)	All(n=31)	LVAD (n=11)	HTx (n=20)	p
Problems with the spouse	1.2±0.6	1.0±0.0	1.3±0.7	0.172
Interest in sexual activity	1.9±1.0	2.3±1.1	1.7±0.9	0.187
Problem with sexual activity	2.0±1.7	2.4±1.2	1.8±1.1	0.195
Pleasure or satisfaction with sex	1.9±1.1	2.5±1.0	1.5±0.9	0.003*
Disturbance to sexual performance	1.9±1.1	2.4±1.3	1.6±0.9	0.064

Obstructs to sexual performance

- 15 patients (48%) reported problems in performing sex (8 LVAD, 7 HTx), significant in 9 (29%) (5 LVAD, 4 HTx).
- Listed causes:
 - erectile dysfunction or dryness (7)
 - problems with LVAD machine (4)
 - fear of injury (3)
 - feeling depressed (3)
 - problems with orgasm (3)
 - general physical weakness (2)
 - lack of partner's interest (3)
 - problem of self-image (1)
 - Pain (1)

Conclusions

- Asking the sex questions was feasible and rewarding
- Sexual dysfunction may improve in patients undergoing HTx and LVAD implantation
- There are however several problems that limit sexual function and are related to equipment, psychological or physical status
- These issues might be important to address in patient education and future research

Thank you

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