

# Effects of the Continuous Flow Left Ventricular Assist Device on Potential Heart Transplant Candidates

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## Introduction

Heart failure (HF) is a serious, high-risk illness that can cause mortality and it is projected that its prevalence will rise. Although heart transplantation (HTx) is the gold standard of treatments, it can only be used in certain circumstances due to the scarcity of qualified organ donors and the high waiting list mortality. Through the introduction of continuous flow implanted left ventricular assist devices (LVADs), bridge-to-transplant (BTT) care of patients awaiting HTx has recently undergone a radical change. Despite the positive outcomes of this mechanical assistance, comparison studies between HTx candidates and those receiving normal medical care are still lacking and inconclusive. As a result, physicians' and patients' preferences continue to play a significant role in the decision to implant a lasting LVAD as BTT.

## Description

There is a rising disparity between the number of advanced heart failure patients waiting for an HTx and the constrained supply of donor organs in the modern age. Continuous-flow implanted LVADs may be a life-saving treatment in this situation. Only randomised clinical trials are often advised for establishing a level of evidence appropriate for altering practise [1]. There are currently no randomised trials of BTT-focused LVAD treatment. This is primarily because it is still not possible to randomly assign an outpatient HTx candidate to either a double surgical step (LVAD plus HTx) or direct HTx. In our study, we concentrated on this effective pre-transplantation method and created a single-center retrospective analysis of HTx patients who were appropriate for LVAD implantation, dividing them according to the pre-transplantation method employed [2].

Prior to HTx, the use of LVAD dramatically increased survival. Furthermore, our multi-state model demonstrated a substantial overall survival advantage in LVAD patients. According to INTERMACS registry data, continuous flow pumps enhanced 1-year survival from 65 to 81 percent following implantation. However, there hasn't yet been shown that utilising an LVAD increases the chances of survival in HTx candidates. To answer the question, one method is to contextualise the observation by taking into account both the pre- and post-HTx survival durations [3].

There are few comparative studies of the effects of LVAD prior to HTx in the literature. The effectiveness of pulsatile-LVADs, no-LVADs and CF-LVADs were compared by Thagavi, et al (2nd and 3rd generation). Compared to the other two groups, they demonstrated considerably better survival before HTx with continuous-flow devices, while multivariate analysis was unable to identify any relationship with better survival. In their analysis of data from the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) database, Trivedi and colleagues

found that patients on the waiting list who were linked to HeartMate II had a considerably greater 1-year survival rate than patients without an LVAD. These findings were supported by a more recent investigation of the UNOS registry.

In terms of post-HTx outcomes, we noticed similar outcomes in our group of patients with and without LVAD. Interestingly, despite this finding, we saw a greater risk of clinical deterioration at HTx in those without LVAD. This might indicate that HTx has the ability to lessen the adverse consequences of waiting without reliable mechanical circulatory support. The most recent research of the ISHLT heart transplant registry contradicted our findings and revealed that using an LVAD significantly increases the chance of dying one year after receiving a heart transplant (HR 1.42, p 0.01) as well as five years later (1.34, p 0.01). The kind of LVAD included in this investigation, which may have included intra- and para-corporeal mixed generation devices, was not specified, though [4].

Despite the intriguing conclusions reached by analysing the pre- and post-HTx findings separately, we aimed to extensively evaluate the overall effect of LVADs. An examination of overall survival revealed that patients with LVADs had considerably greater survival rates than those without them. However, the existence of several concurrent treatments and events may pose a limitation to this strategy. We have used a multi-state survival model, which offers a trustworthy evaluation of the mechanisms by which patient's transition through several states over time, to get over these restrictions. The conceivable states in our investigation were No-LVAD, LVAD, HTx and death. We were able to determine the risk of mortality associated with each therapy by examining the probability of switching between them and dying [5].

## Conclusion

In summary, our research shows that LVAD usage as a BTT is connected to a considerably lower mortality risk in HTx candidates. Durable mechanical assistance was protective prior to HTx and after treatment, outcomes were equivalent to those in individuals who weren't aided. The immunological effects of LVAD implantation in elective patients are negligible.

## References

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