

Earlier Surgical Intervention for Mitral Valve Disease Better



According to an article published in *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, earlier surgical intervention and less invasive techniques when treating degenerative mitral valve disease are more beneficial for patients than watchful waiting.

Degenerative mitral valve disease is irreversible and can eventually lead to regurgitation and heart failure. There is still significant debate as to whether early surgical repair is better in patients without symptoms or watchful waiting is more effective.

Farhang Yazdchi, MD, MS, and colleagues, from the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, assessed trends in patient characteristics, timing of intervention, and surgical techniques for mitral valve regurgitation by reviewing the records of 5,902 patients over a 25-year period – from 1985 to 2011.

They observed that earlier intervention with less invasive surgical repair in patients before they suffered any disease symptoms such as atrial fibrillation or heart failure was more beneficial. They also found that patients in the latter years of the study (2005-2011) were released two days sooner as compared to those treated in the earlier years of study (1985-1997) primarily due to the lesser large chest incisions in the latter years and more asymptomatic patients.

"Surgery is almost unavoidable in patients with severe degenerative mitral valve regurgitation. Our study has shown that the key to successful treatment is a timely referral for surgical intervention at an advanced repair center with highly skilled heart teams," said Dr. Yazdchi.

Dr. Yazdchi highlights that mitral valve repair at Cleveland Clinic has an almost 100 percent success rate and mortality rates continue to decline and hospital stays remain shortened. It is thus important that patients diagnosed with mitral valve regurgitation seek surgical consultation as soon as possible, even if they do not have any symptoms.

Source: Elsevier

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