# New Study Shows Viability of Heart Pumps for Older Heart-Failure Patients

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SAN DIEGO, June 28, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Results of a clinical research study at Sharp Memorial Hospital indicate that patients 70 years of age or older have good functional recovery, survival and quality of life at two years when undergoing left ventricular assist device (LVAD) therapy for heart failure. The study was released in the June 21 edition of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology.*

(Photo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20110628/LA27443 [1])

The study's lead author, Robert M. Adamson, MD, medical director of the cardiac transplantation program at Sharp Memorial, and colleagues concluded that LVAD therapy should be considered an "attractive option" for some patients, and that advanced age alone should not determine whether or not a patient receives LVAD support. The research team also noted that "very good results can be achieved in a community hospital setting with a focused effort from a dedicated team."

Patients in the study were implanted with Thoratec's HeartMate II LVAD, which received FDA approval for bridge to transplantation therapy in April 2008 and for destination therapy in January 2010 for transplant-ineligible heart-failure patients. At Sharp Memorial, which serves as a Thoratec training site, the transplant team has implanted nearly 130 HeartMate II devices. The physicians and staff there have been working together since the 1980s and performed San Diego's first heart transplant in 1985. Since then, the team has performed more than 340 heart transplants and numerous implant procedures. They also have the longest LVAD-supported patient in the world, who first received the device more than nine years ago in March 2002.

"With an increasing population of elderly patients with advanced heart failure who have limited treatment options, the FDA's approval of LVAD therapy make sense f
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