

Heart transplant mental toll may be greater for women

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Men less depressed, anxious 100 days after procedure, study finds.

(HealthDay)—Women may have more mental stress after a heart transplant than men, a new study finds.

Heart transplant patients with higher levels of [mental stress](#) are less likely to take medications as prescribed and are at higher risk for infection, the researchers noted.

The study looked at 91 [heart transplant patients](#), almost one-third of them women, in the first 100 days after they received their new heart. The researchers found that high levels of depression were experienced by 39 percent of women, compared to 15 percent of men.

High levels of anxiety occurred in more than three-quarters of women, versus 46 percent of men. Women also felt they had less control over their health than men, according to the study that was to be presented Tuesday at the American Heart Association's annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Health care providers should monitor heart transplant patients—especially women—for signs of mental stress, said researcher Lynn Doering, of the School of Nursing at University of California, Los Angeles, and colleagues.

In an American Heart Association news release, the researchers called for the creation of gender-specific programs to assist heart transplant patients as they go through the difficult experience.

Research presented at meetings is usually considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed medical journal.

More information: The U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has more about [heart transplantation](#).

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