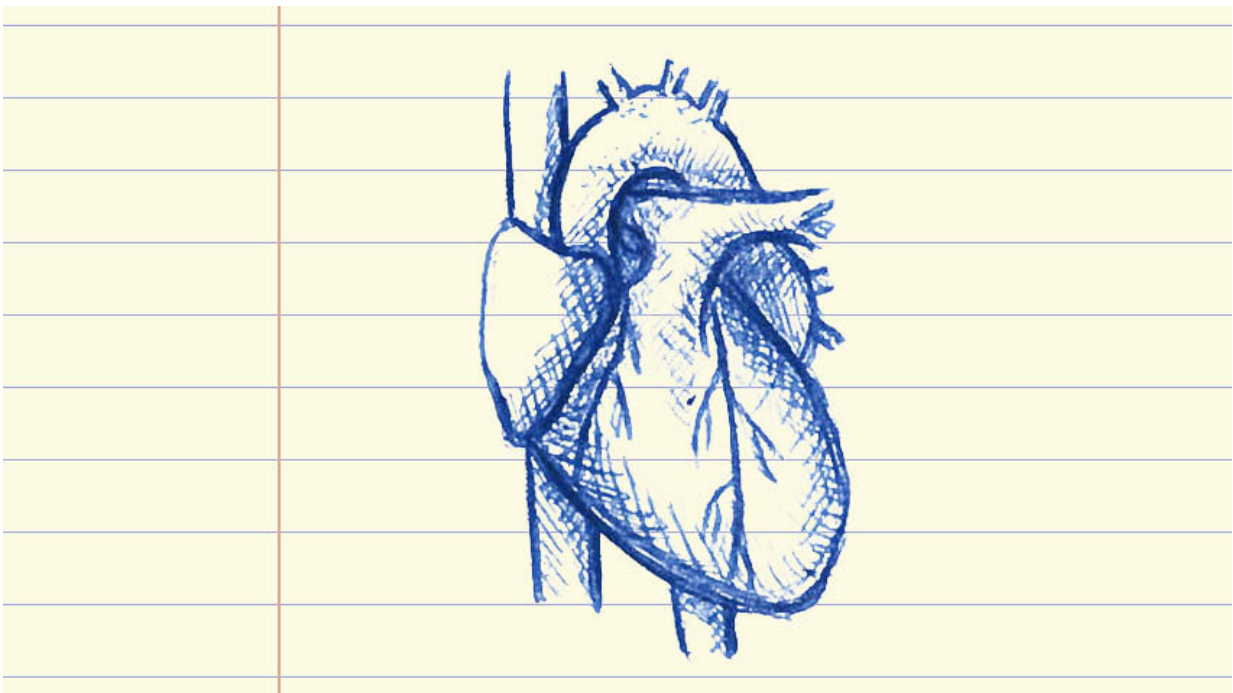


Racial, gender disparities observed in heart transplant recipients with COVID-19 infection

June 9 2020, by Haley Otman



Credit: Stephanie King

Physician-scientists specializing in heart failure wanted to know: if their heart transplant patients contract COVID-19, would they have a different experience than the general public or others who are also immunosuppressed?

A team of Michigan Medicine Frankel Cardiovascular Center researchers, led by Matthew Konerman, M.D., identified 13 patients who had a previous heart transplant and were admitted to one of two hospitals in southeast Michigan in March or April for COVID-19 symptoms. All were black males.

"Despite immunosuppression, the clinical presentation and laboratory markers of disease severity showed similarities to what has been observed in the [general population](#)," says first author Scott Ketcham, M.D., an [internal medicine](#) resident physician. "However, almost half were critically ill and there was a higher rate of mortality than described among non-heart transplant recipients admitted with COVID-19."

The researchers recommend further research with a focus on racial and gender disparities in COVID-19 and on the identification of prognostic markers, treatments and appropriate immunosuppression management for patients with heart transplant with COVID-19.

More information: Scott W. Ketcham et al, Coronavirus Disease-2019 in Heart Transplant Recipients in Southeastern Michigan: A Case Series, *Journal of Cardiac Failure* (2020). [DOI: 10.1016/j.cardfail.2020.05.008](#)

Provided by University of Michigan

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