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65 years transplant patients and older getting equal opportunity to receive the available donated hearts: Is it organ abuse?

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Background: Cardiac transplantation has evolved as the most effective therapy for advanced heart failure patients. The availability of donor organs remains the major limitation to transplantation; however old age has conventionally been considered a contraindication for heart transplantation.

Methods: Our study is based on a retrospective analysis for the results of 13 (4.5%) patients aged 65 and older underwent heart transplantation between May 2008 and December 2015. These patients were compared with two groups of patients, 39 (13.5%) patients who were 60 years of age and below 65 and 236 (82%) adult recipients who were younger than 60 years at the time of transplantation and during the same period.

Results: Among group I, 69.2% of patients were males with a mean age of 68.3 ± 3.5 years, while in group II, 71.8% were males with a mean age of 61.7 ± 1.3 years, and among group III, 83.4% were males with a mean age 43.72 ± 11.41 years ; ($p=0.237$). No significant difference was found regarding the rate of three month survival among all groups ($p=0.46$). Although one year survival was higher among the young patients group ($p=0.524$), still the rate of three year survival showed no statistically significant difference among three groups ($p=0.476$).

Conclusion: According to our experience among heart transplant candidates 65 years and older, we believe that equal opportunity for transplantation should be given to the appropriately selected older patients.

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