



**ASE** American Society of  
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**HEART VALVE SURGICAL CANDIDATES CAN NOW BETTER PREDICT THEIR  
RISK OF DYING FOLLOWING SURGERY**

*New study will help patients and families calculate risk of heart valve surgery*

**San Diego, CA – JUNE 14, 2010** – Researchers have found that current models used to predict heart valve surgery mortality, leave out one critical factor, according to a study presented at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Scientific Sessions of the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE). The investigators found that evaluating the dimension of the right ventricle of the heart pre-operatively, with a heart ultrasound, can help predict mortality in patients undergoing mitral valve surgery.

Current models used to predict heart valve surgery mortality are based on clinical preoperative risk factors and observation of left ventricular function. However, right ventricular (RV) parameters are currently not included in the evaluation. The study investigated the prognostic impact of pre-op RV dimension or size among other factors to predict late mortality in patients undergoing mitral valve surgery.

“The findings will help caregivers, patients and families make educated decisions about the appropriate timing of heart surgery,” said Dr. Venkatesh Y. Anjan of Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine, a lead author of the study. “Looking at the right heart using an echocardiogram or heart ultrasound gives additional information, allowing for a more thorough assessment of the risk associated with performing mitral valve surgery.”

Researchers analyzed the preoperative echocardiograms of 258 patients and found that the RV dimension was 3.5 +/- 0.7 cm amongst the survivors and 4.1 +/- 0.7 cm in the patients who died.

“This finding adds to existing preoperative risk assessment models—suggesting that the right ventricular dimension is one of the independent predictors of long-term mortality,” said Anjan. “The findings are also extremely important to surgeons and physicians who refer patients for this type of procedure.”

The study was conducted by Venkatesh Y. Anjan, Robert O. Bonow, Jyothy Puthumana, Asim Ansari, Karolina M. Zareba, Brittany R. Lapin, Nausheen Akhter, Patrick M.

McCarthy and Vera H. Rigolin at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, IL.

*The American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) is a professional organization of physicians, cardiac sonographers, nurses and scientists involved in echocardiography, the use of ultrasound to image the heart and cardiovascular system. The organization was founded in 1975 and is the largest international organization for cardiovascular ultrasound imaging. For more information on ASE, visit [www.asecho.org](http://www.asecho.org) or ASE's public information site, [www.SeeMyHeart.org](http://www.SeeMyHeart.org).*

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