

NEWS



PARTNER trial demonstrates promising 2-year results in high-risk surgery candidates

The investigators are optimistic that the results provide compelling evidence in support of the use of transcatheter aortic valve replacement as a surgical alternative in high-risk patients.

Positive 2-year follow-up results from the high-risk cohort of the PARTNER trial investigating the Edwards SAPIEN® (Edwards Lifesciences, Irvine, CA, USA) transcatheter heart valve were presented at the recent American College of Cardiology 61st Annual Scientific Session in Chicago (IL, USA) and published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The authors describe the results as demonstrating that transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) with the SAPIEN valve is a viable alternative to surgery in patients with severe aortic stenosis.

The cohort described in the recently released results consisted of 699 patients with severe, symptomatic aortic stenosis who were considered to be at high risk for open heart surgery. Patients were randomized to undergo conventional open

heart surgery or a transapical delivery of a SAPIEN valve.

The trial's primary end point was all-cause mortality after 1 year. At 2 years, the PARTNER investigators found no significant differences in all-cause mortality between the surgically and TAVR-treated groups (35 vs 33.9%; $p = 0.78$).

Earlier results from the PARTNER trial suggested that TAVR could cause an increase in early and, possibly, late strokes; these increases were found in the first days and weeks after TAVR, with the authors hypothesizing that this was owing to an increase in the release of atherothrombotic debris, leading to embolic ischemic strokes. However, after this early period, the authors reported that there was no evidence of increased stroke rates.



"Work now should be directed toward reducing paravalvular aortic regurgitation..."



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