

HEART TRANSPLANT



A heart transplant is an operation used to remove a damaged or unhealthy heart and replace it with a donor heart. Heart transplants are used only in severe cases. Success rates are high, with 75% of patients living an additional three years after their operation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



On average, there are **4,000 candidates** on the wait list for a heart transplant in the United States.



The average cost of a heart transplant in 2020 was nearly **\$2 million**.



There are about **100,000 annual deaths** of patients on an organ transplant list.

POPULATION STATISTICS

- On average, over 4,000 patients are on the wait list for heart transplants in the United States.
- More than 4,000 heart transplants took place in 2022.

DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Complications that can lead to a heart transplant include heart failure caused by:

- Coronary artery or heart disease
- Abnormal heart rhythms
- A weakened heart muscle
- Abnormal heart valves
- Heart birth defects

FINANCIAL BURDEN

Given that heart transplant patients spend up to three weeks in the hospital and, on average, three more months being monitored, heart transplants are expensive.

- The average cost of a heart transplant in 2020 was nearly \$2 million.
- Medicare covers 80% of a heart transplant, but private insurance coverage rates vary.
- Additional costs to patients include time off work, transportation to a transplant facility, lodging for family and childcare costs.

ACCESS ISSUES

The largest barrier to care for heart transplant patients is the ratio of available matched to needed donor hearts. On average, there are over 100,000 annual deaths of patients on an organ transplant list.

There are also disparities. Patients who are black, female or lack private insurance have a more difficult time gaining access to a transplant list referral. Black Americans, in particular, have longer wait times than other racial and ethnic groups.