



Report to Our Communities

Focus on: Heart Transplantation

Dear Colleagues:

Cardiovascular medicine continues to experience rapidly evolving changes, and the area of transplantation is no exception. In 2006, in addition to evaluating 152 patients for heart transplant candidacy, we embraced numerous clinical trials which closely aligned with our mission of offering the best hope for many cardiac patients. We also laid the foundation for a wider spectrum of services to patients, by recruiting Drs. Geetha Bhat, Guillermo Cintron, Jr., and Peter Berman, well-respected cardiologists who manage patients with congestive heart failure.

On behalf of my colleagues, we appreciate the trust you and other referring physicians place in us. Our goal of healing failing hearts remains the focus of the work we do, and is only possible through cooperative efforts. Since our program's inception, we have been a part of over 780 heart transplants. Thank you for making 2006 another rewarding year for patients whose lives we were able to change.

Sincerely,

Debbie Rinde-Hoffman, MD, FACC
Medical Director, Heart Transplant Program

Florida Program Statistics At a Glance

1-Year Graft Survival

National Average
87.3%

Jackson Memorial Hospital at the
University of Miami
88.5%

LifeLink HealthCare Institute
at Tampa General Hospital
94.7%

Mayo Clinic at St. Luke's Hospital
100%

Shands Hospital
at the University of Florida
91.3%

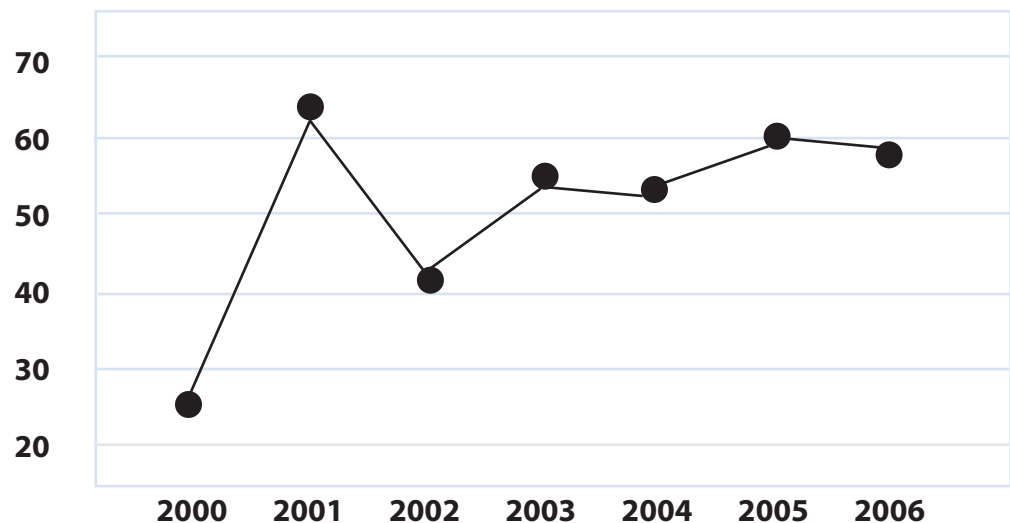
**Source: OPTN/SRTR data
as of 7/11/2006.*

Headline photos, left to right: Beverly, Riley and Darren received life-saving heart transplants.

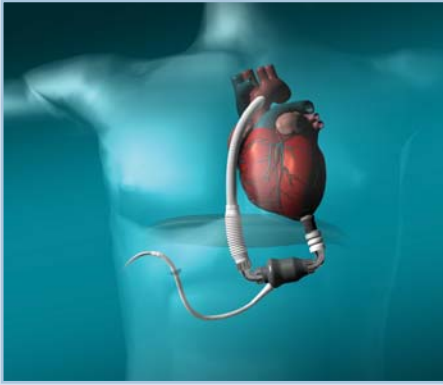


Advanced medical, surgical & transplant patient care

LifeLink HealthCare Institute
Historical Perspective: Heart Transplants*



**Source: LifeLink HealthCare Institute*



The HeartMate II by Thoratec

LifeLink HealthCare Institute's involvement in the Heartmate II LVAS clinical trial has proved quite gratifying. As a result of Thoratec's newest ventricular assist device, individuals unready or ineligible for transplant have options beyond pharmacological management.

The study consists of two arms: patients who require additional lead time prior to receiving a heart transplant and patients who, because of other illnesses, are not candidates for transplant. The HeartMate II represents a new era in long-term mechanical circulatory support. The device is fully implantable, and designed to last 5-8 years. Recipients may be discharged home and may resume active lives.

HealthCare Institute cardiologists also serve as principal investigators for approximately three drug studies involving immunosuppression. In these studies, the use of corticosteroids, Thymoglobulin and Sirolimus are being reviewed, while two studies related to treatment for Congestive Heart Failure are also ongoing. For more information regarding clinical trials, please contact LifeLink HealthCare Institute Cardiology: 813-251-0793.



Dr. Mark Weston has performed extensive research in cardiac transplantation, including a study involving Doppler tissue imaging to determine rejection. He joined LifeLink in 1996 and sees a high volume of patients daily.



Dr. Guillermo Cintron, Jr., joined LifeLink in 2006. He has trained over 80 cardiologists and several hundred internists throughout Florida and Puerto Rico. He has a special interest in heart failure disease management.



Dr. Debbie Rinde-Hoffman is a sought-after speaker on issues related to women and heart disease. In 1998 she joined LifeLink, where her interventional expertise has helped thousands of heart transplant recipients.



Dr. Peter Berman specializes in the management of advanced congestive heart failure. Trained as an interventional cardiologist, he joined LifeLink in 2006 and concentrates on imaging and non-invasive cardiology.



Dr. Geetha Bhat has served as Principal Investigator for landmark studies in heart failure, and is often invited to speak at national and international conferences about her experience. She joined LifeLink in 2006.

LifeLink HealthCare Institute
Cardiology Team:

Psychologist

Kristin M. Kronsoble, PhD, ABPP

Nurse Practitioners

Lisa Bartell, ARNP
Penny Lee, ARNP
Brenda McCarthy, ARNP
Karen Wollenberg, ARNP

Clinical Nurses

Louise Anderson, RN
Shirley Heinrichs, LPN