CRISPR gene editing can treat heart disease and repair damaged tissue after a heart attack

Each year, cardiovascular disease (CVD) — also known as heart disease — accounts for about 32% of all deaths around the world.

The most common type of heart disease is coronary artery disease, where blood is not able to flow properly to the heart. If blood flow is completely blocked to the heart, this can cause a heart attack.

Researchers from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center believe a new CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing therapy can both help treat heart disease and repair damaged tissue immediately after a heart attack via a mouse model.

The study was recently published in the journal *Science*.

[Cardiologist Dr. Richard Wright] said if this new gene therapy works, it would be a "game changer."

"What this shows is that if you can manipulate the body's response to injury, you could potentially avoid what we used to think was unavoidable (damage)," he explained. "In this case, cardiac dysfunction following ischemic injury to the heart. So it's huge if it pans out."

Dr. Wright did caution, however, that since this study was conducted in mice, not all therapies that work for mice will work for humans.

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