REFERENCES


REPLY

We appreciate the interest of Dr. Rahimtoola, which allows underscoring further the importance of detecting pulmonary hypertension in patients with aortic stenosis.

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Coronary Atherosclerosis and Body Iron Stores

We read with great interest the study by Gaenzer et al. (1) in a recent issue of the Journal. The investigators studied associations between iron status and early functional and structural vascular abnormalities in patients with hereditary hemochromatosis and found that impaired endothelial function and increased intima-media thickness (IMT) may be associated with iron overload, with subsequent induction of oxidative stress. Gaenzer and colleagues suggested that iron-depletion therapy, which normalizes endothelial function, may reduce the increased risk of cardiovascular events.

A possible association between body iron status and the risk of coronary heart disease was first supported by findings from a Finnish study relating increased levels of both serum ferritin and dietary iron to an increased risk of myocardial infarction in men (2). It is believed that inflammation and oxidation are important mechanisms involved in the complex pathological process of atherogenesis (3). Free radical production is catalyzed and accel-