

## PhD project-Peripartum Cardiomyopathy-an autoimmune disease?

The topic of Dr. Forster's research looked at peripartum cardiomyopathy, a disease common in South African women, with a specific focus on the aetiology and autoimmune component of this disease. As several publications from our research group have previously suggested (The Lancet August 2006), there is a need to better understand the potential risk factors for these conditions; and as yet the genetic and immune component of this disease remains unknown.

He contributed to numerous abstracts and several publications in that area ( see publication in Pdf). Dr. Forster won an prestigious National Institute of Health ( NIH) fellowship and spend a total of 6 months at Emory University, Atlanta USA. He also won several other national and international travel scholarships and other awards. Dr. Forster has obtained his PhD October 2007

### **Articles:**

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Forster O, Essop M, Sliwa K. Present concepts of the aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of peripartum cardiomyopathy. SA Heart 2006; Vol 3, No 4: 24-34.

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### **Abstracts:**

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Forster O, Sundstrom JB, Tshani W, Nel MJ, Becker A, Yip A, Ansari AA, Essop MR, Sliwa K. Absence of a role of human T-lymphotropic viruses (HTLV-I/II) in the pathogenesis of peripartum cardiomyopathy. South African Medical Journal 2005. Vol. 95, No. 10: 805

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Forster O, Sundstrom JB, Ansari AA, Tshani W, Nel MJ, Becker A, Yip A, Essop MR, Sliwa K. Heart failure therapy leads to significant reduction of absolute CD4 counts in HIV-1 negative but not in HIV-1 positive patients with peripartum cardiomyopathy. South African Medical Journal 2005. Vol. 95, No. 10: 806

Forster O, Sundstrom JB, Ansari AA, Tshani W, Nel MJ, Becker A, Yip A, Essop MR, Sliwa K. HIV-1 infection does not influence the kinetics of cardiac function improvement in patients with peripartum cardiomyopathy treated with standard heart failure therapy. South African Medical Journal 2005. Vol. 95, No. 10: 807

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