

NEWS RELEASE

GOOD SHEPHERD MEDICAL CENTER PHYSICIANS EMPLOY NEW LIFE-SAVING MEDICAL DEVICE FOR TREATMENT OF AORTIC ANEURYSMS

Recently approved by FDA, Latest Medtronic Stent Graft Makes Minimally-Invasive Treatment for Aortic Aneurysms Accessible to More Patients

October 2, 2009 – Physicians at Good Shepherd Medical Center have recently used an innovative new medical device for the treatment of aortic aneurysms — dangerous bulges or weakenings in the body's largest artery that can rupture with fatal consequences if left untreated.

Drs. Samir Germanwala and David Sadler are among the first physicians in Longview to use the Talent Thoracic Stent Graft since its approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2008 and performed the procedure in Good Shepherd Medical Center's Cath Lab.

Treatment for aortic aneurysms involves either invasive open surgical repair — in which the body is opened and major organs temporarily moved to access the aorta — or minimally-invasive endovascular repair (EVAR) with stent grafts. However, some patients have not been eligible for this less-invasive option due to complications of their anatomy and the limitations of earlier devices. EVAR involves making two small incisions in the groin and inserting the device through the femoral artery to reach the aneurysm. By creating a new pathway for blood flow, the stent graft reduces pressure on the aneurysm and, by extension, the risk of rupture.

In clinical studies, EVAR has been shown to be an effective therapy for aortic aneurysms, with fewer postoperative complications and shorter recovery times than open surgical repair. Results from a U.S. study published recently in *The New England Journal of Medicine* (Jan. 31, 2008), for example, indicate that perioperative mortality was significantly lower after EVAR than after open repair for abdominal aortic aneurysms. Similarly, in a landmark study conducted in the United Kingdom and published in *The Lancet* (Sept. 4, 2004), the 30-day mortality rate for EVAR patients with abdominal aortic aneurysms was 1.7 percent compared to 4.7 percent for patients who underwent open repair – a nearly threefold difference.

About Aortic Aneurysms

The aorta is the largest blood vessel in the body. It branches off the heart and runs through the center of the torso. The aorta carries blood away from the heart to the rest of the body. Two common locations for aortic conditions are in the abdominal (midsection) and thoracic (upper chest) regions.

Abdominal aortic aneurysms (AAAs) are present in an estimated 1.2 million people and responsible for approximately 15,000 annual deaths in the United States. Ruptured AAAs are currently the 10th leading cause of death among American men over age 55, with less than 20 percent surviving a rupture. Men and women over 55 years of age are at increased risk for AAA, especially men and women who have risk factors for cardiovascular disease (smoking, high blood pressure) and a family history of AAA. Women with a positive family history of AAA or cardiovascular risk factors have almost the same incidence as men.

While most AAAs are never diagnosed because the condition typically causes no symptoms, nearly all AAAs can be detected through a simple, painless and inexpensive ultrasound screening. As of January 1, 2007, Medicare has been offering a free, one-time, AAA ultrasound screening benefit to qualified at-risk seniors linked to their Welcome to Medicare Physical Exam.

Thoracic aneurysms affect 10 out of every 100,000 older Americans, and data suggests this rate is increasing steadily. Common among smokers, thoracic aortic aneurysms often result from hardening of the arteries, hypertension, or congenital disorders such as Marfan's syndrome. Preventive measures include smoking cessation, controlling blood pressure and blood lipid levels, and routine exercise. Detection of thoracic aortic aneurysms is most commonly achieved through computed tomography (CT) scans.

About Talent Stent Grafts

Talent Stent Grafts make EVAR accessible to up to an additional 25 percent of aortic aneurysm patients because of their unique features. These features include a wide range of diameters, which offer physicians multiple options to customize the devices for their patients' needs and to treat a wider range of aortic anatomies than with other available stent grafts.

The Talent Stent Grafts consist of a woven polyester tube (graft) supported by a tubular metal web (resilient springs commonly referred to as stents). They are made by Medtronic, Inc., the world's leading medical technology company. Medtronic stent grafts have been used in the treatment of more than 130,000 patients with aortic aneurysms dating back to 1995, more than any other company. It offers the broadest portfolio of endovascular stent grafts in the industry.

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