

World First In Cardiac Surgery

(PRNewswire) Doctors at London Health Sciences Center (LHSC) are the first in the world to use a new implantable surgical device that could revolutionize aortic valve bypass surgery. On November 3, 2010, LHSC's cardiac surgery team led by Drs. Bob Kiaii and Linrui Guo successfully performed an aortic valve bypass using a specialized Aortic Valve Bypass (AVB) device. This was done to treat a patient with critical aortic stenosis who could not have conventional treatments due to his underlying high risk condition. "There were no options left for the patient. He was at a point where no more than 30 percent of his blood was being pumped out of his heart. Not only was he severely fatigued and weakened, but he was at a high risk for having a stroke," explains Dr. Kiaii, chair/chief of the cardiac surgery team.

The aortic valve bypass using the Correx AVB device looks to reduce the complexity of this very difficult surgery. It involves a specialized delivery mechanism that renders the surgery almost bloodless and eliminates the need to stop the heart and put the patient on a heart-lung bypass machine. "The Correx AVB device makes aortic valve bypass surgery much safer for the patient and their recovery time is faster. The added benefit is that it is also an easier surgery for cardiac surgeons to perform, which should increase treatment options for patients with critical aortic stenosis," says Dr. Guo, cardiac surgeon.

Gunars Liepens, 75, from London, Ontario, is the first person in the world to undergo this procedure using the AVB device. He has recuperated from his surgery and is doing well. "Before the surgery, I could barely do five minutes on the treadmill and I was tired constantly. Right after the surgery, I felt better. Now, I am up to 30 minutes a day on the treadmill and I am able to go with my wife on outings," says Mr. Liepens.

LHSC's CSTAR program helped test and validate the device made by Correx Inc. of Waltham, MA. Surgeons from LHSC, as well as from Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and Foothills Medical Center in Alberta were trained at CSTAR's facilities. In addition, leading heart surgeons from Europe will soon be coming to CSTAR to learn how to perform this surgery and implant the device in patients with critical aortic stenosis.

London Health Sciences Center has been a medical leader in Canada for 135 years and offers a broad range of specialized clinical services in Ontario.

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