New 'Disappearing Stent' Restores Blood Flow To Hearts

A dissolvable stent that opens clogged arteries in the heart has researchers at Scottsdale Healthcare encouraged that it may become a game changing technology for treating the symptoms of coronary artery disease (CAD), the most common type of heart disease.

Interventional cardiologist David Rizik , MD is the first physician in the western U.S. to successfully implant the investigational device into a heart patient as part of a new clinical trial enrolling patients at Scottsdale Healthcare.

The Absorb Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffold (BVS), made by healthcare company Abbott, is a small mesh tube made of polylactide, a material that is commonly used in medical implants such as dissolvable sutures. Absorb is coated with a medication which reduces inflammation and tissue growth to help prevent renarrowing of the artery.

The scaffold restores blood flow and provides support to the vessel until the artery can stay open on its own. It dissolves over time, potentially allowing the vessel to resume more natural function and movement.

The clinical trial is evaluating potential benefits of Absorb in comparison to the leading metallic drug eluting stent in patients with CAD, the most common cause of death for men and women in the United States. Absorb is authorized for sale in CE Mark countries and is available in Europe, the Middle East, parts of Latin America, and parts of Asia Pacific, including India, Hong Kong, Malaysia and New Zealand.

"The bioresorbable scaffold represents a potential game changing technology for our patients with coronary artery disease," said Dr. Rizik. "The idea of moving away from permanent metal implants to literally disappearing implants is a quantum leap forward for our heart patients at Scottsdale Healthcare. The cardiology team of physicians, nursing staff and clinicians are extremely pleased to participate in the trial of this latest advancement to our community."

Heart disease facts

- Each year, about 785,000 Americans have a first heart attack.
- Another 470,000 who have already experienced one or more heart attacks will have another.
- Heart disease accounts for one of every six deaths that take place in the U.S.

Patients with CAD can experience symptoms such as chest pain and shortness of

breath when the demand for blood to the heart is more than the heart's ability to supply blood due to blockages in the vessels that supply blood to the heart. These blockages are caused by the buildup of fat and cholesterol inside the vessel.

Since the 1970s, physicians have treated CAD patients with less invasive treatment options such as balloon angioplasty, metallic and drug eluting metallic stents, allowing many patients to avoid open heart surgery.

The ABSORB III clinical trial will enroll approximately 2,250 patients, the majority in the United States. Abbott started development of Absorb about a decade ago. Absorb has been implanted in patients from 40 countries worldwide in clinical trials and commercial settings.

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