New Treatment Offered For Patients With Peripheral Artery Disease

OhioHealth Riverside Methodist Hospital is now treating patients with peripheral artery disease (PAD) with the first drug-eluting stent to be used outside of the heart. Cook Medical's Zilver PTX is a drug-coated stent that is used to reopen a long thigh artery, located above the knee (the femoropopliteal artery), narrowed or blocked due to PAD. This is the most common artery for PAD blockages.

"With this approval, treatment of PAD in the United States is expected to undergo the same revolution that drug elution did for treating coronary artery disease," said interventional cardiologist Gary Ansel, MD, system medical chief of the vascular program at OhioHealth. Dr. Ansel, along with Michael Dake, MD, from Stanford University Medical Center, were co-national principle investigators for the Zilver PTX clinical trial.

"It will keep arteries open longer and reduce the need for repeated procedures among a large part of the PAD population. In my opinion, drug-eluting stents will quickly become the standard of care for PAD patients nationwide."

Peripheral artery disease, which affects eight to 12 million Americans, is a common circulatory problem characterized by reduced blood flow to the limbs, usually the legs. One in three people over the age of 50 have PAD. These blockages are the same as those found in the heart and neck. People with PAD often experience leg pain and serious complications including gangrene and skin ulcers.

Zilver PTX is a unique combination therapy device that combines the mechanical support of stenting with the drug paclitaxel, which limits cell growth that can reclog the artery. The medication is slowly released over time to prevent the artery from re-closing.

The combination has been shown to maintain arterial blood flow in seven out of ten patients through 24 months after implantation and reduce the number of repeat procedures.

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