
New Technique Prevents Major Cause For Heart-related Stroke

The procedure was performed Wednesday by Vivek Y. Reddy, MD, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Cardiac Arrhythmia Service at Mount Sinai Heart, and his colleague, Srinivas R. Dukkupati, MD, Director of Mount Sinai's Experimental Electrophysiology Laboratory. With the patient under general anesthesia, the physicians guided two catheters into the patient's heart to seal the LAA with a pre-tied suture loop. The technique is a safe alternative to drug therapies such as the blood thinner warfarin (Coumadin) that can have serious side effects, as well as open-heart surgery, and more invasive implant surgery.

"People who take Coumadin because of atrial fibrillation include active and otherwise healthy people, as well as elderly people for whom the drug may be contraindicated," said Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Director of Mount Sinai Heart and Chair of the American/European Guidelines of Atrial Fibrillation.

Drs. Reddy and Dukkupati joined Mount Sinai this month to focus on building the institution's services for heart-rhythm disorders. They had been performing pre-clinical testing of the non-surgical LAA device, and this procedure represents its first application in people in the United States.

"We are very proud of the recruitment of Dr. Reddy and his exceptionally talented team," said Wayne Keathley, President and Chief Operating Officer of The Mount Sinai Hospital. "Their pioneering work has the potential to redirect the field of cardiac rhythm disorders."

"Compared to a lifetime of medication therapy, or other surgical modalities, a one-time, non-surgical procedure to relieve the complications of AFib offers a whole new paradigm," said Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, The Mount Sinai Medical Center. "Drs. Reddy and Dukkupati have ushered in a new standard of care for people with this serious cardiac condition."

Approximately 6 million U.S. adults have been diagnosed with AFib, a condition characterized by a rapid and irregular heart beat that can cause serious complications, including stroke and early death. The majority of these patients take warfarin because left untreated, AFib can cause life-threatening blood clots. Approximately 25-30 percent of patients with AFib have contraindications to the drug

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