

brain

New procedures are replacing invasive surgery for neurovascular disorders.

The health care professionals at Advocate Christ Medical Center's Neurosciences Institute are leading the way in innovative and minimally invasive treatments for aneurysms and stroke.

Last September, after experiencing a series of severe headaches, Stephanie Gilmer-Compton, a 67-year-old woman from one of Chicago's south suburbs, became the

latest patient to benefit from Pipeline[®], an innovative and minimally invasive device for treating aneurysms.

IN THE PIPELINE

The procedure involves use of the Pipeline[®] Embolization Device, which is a stent inserted into a blood vessel through a tiny catheter threaded from the leg into the brain in order to divert blood flow away from and seal off the aneurysm. The physician who performed the procedure was Thomas Grobelny, MD, director of the neurovascular program at the Neurosciences Institute and a leader in innovative treatments for acute neurological conditions. "I was so afraid when I first arrived at the ICU," says Gilmer-Compton. "I felt so much better when Dr. Grobelny came into the room and said, 'Everything is going to be okay.'"

In the past, the only option available to patients suffering from brain aneurysms and strokes was open surgery. Now, by using less invasive treatments that get to a vascular problem through the blood vessels, Dr. Grobelny is offering new hope to those patients. The Pipeline device is part of a trend toward less



LIVE

GROW

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Did you know? The median age for stroke caused by aneurysm is 50 years old.

breakthroughs

invasive treatments for brain aneurysms, which are life-threatening when they rupture. “Not only does the new Pipeline device revolutionize how we treat brain aneurysms—especially large ones—it is reducing the recurrence rate from what was about 30 percent to a rate of maybe 5 percent.”

One of the greatest advantages of the Pipeline procedure is that it usually requires only an overnight stay. Gilmer-Compton was able to return home the day after the procedure. By Thanksgiving, she was able to cook dinner for the family. “By Christmas, I was almost back to my old self,” she says.

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

It’s no wonder that Advocate Christ Medical Center is a major referral hospital for the neurosciences. Recently, Father Andrew Malarz, a Catholic priest from the St. Andrew Parish in Cape Coral, Fla., sought out Dr. Grobelny in February, after undergoing surgery at the Mayo Clinic, where the surgeon was only able to clip part of the aneurysm. “The doctors at Mayo told me that it was impossible to fix my aneurysm from the inside,” says Father Andrew. Following an angiogram and consultation with Dr. Grobelny, Father Andrew underwent two successful procedures. “With his extremely rare skills and knowledge, Dr. Grobelny does impossible things,” Father Andrew says. “Today, I feel like a totally new man, and everyone tells me I look much happier—and younger!”

ADVANCES IN STROKE TREATMENT

Advocate Christ Medical Center is a designated primary stroke center certified by the Joint Commission—one of only 17 primary



A weakness in the side of an artery can lead to a dangerous bulge, or aneurysm. If the bulge ruptures, the patient will suffer a harmful stroke.

ANEURYSMS

Some things you may not know about aneurysms:

- About 25,000 to 50,000 people have a brain hemorrhage caused by a ruptured aneurysm in the U.S. each year.
- Women are more likely than men to have an aneurysm.
- African-Americans have a greater risk of hemorrhage from an aneurysm.
- Many aneurysms go undetected because there are no symptoms until they rupture.
- Ruptured aneurysms are most common in middle age, but can happen at any age.

stroke centers in the Chicago area. This designation acknowledges that Christ Medical Center is expert at assessing stroke patients effectively and administering treatments that can prevent disability. The medical center has also achieved the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With the Guidelines®—Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of stroke care.



Because minutes count when an individual is experiencing a stroke, the accepted standard is to administer tPA, a drug that breaks up clots interrupting blood flow to the brain, up to four-and-a-half hours after the first symptoms have been recognized. The highly skilled staff at Advocate Christ Medical Center has instituted lifesaving stroke protocols that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

CONTINUUM OF CARE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

assist with identifying a stroke patient and expediting their care.

“If a patient were to go beyond that time frame—but still within eight hours—Dr. Grobelny might be consulted to determine whether the patient is a candidate for a different type of intervention,” says Franco Campanella, MD, director of the stroke program at Advocate Christ Medical Center. “He then might be able to administer tPA interarterially or use a mechanical device to actually pull the clot out.” In fact, Dr. Grobelny and his team are leading the way in providing new treatments for stroke patients. The new Solitaire™ flow-restoration device, for example, is a single device that can restore circulation and remove clots at the same time. It is showing significant promise. “We’re one of a few Chicago area institutions treating patients with this new neurovascular device. Our results have been highly successful,” says Dr. Grobelny.

COMPREHENSIVE CARE

Although Advocate Christ Medical Center is a recognized primary stroke center, the institution is considering taking steps to become a comprehensive stroke center. “We believe we’re beyond the requirements for a primary stroke center,” says Dr. Campanella. “We have all the pieces in place to become a comprehensive stroke center: interventional radiology, multiple neurosurgeons, a neuro-intensive care unit, stroke doctors on call 24/7 and an ER that regularly treats a great number of stroke patients in the Southland, if not the whole state. That’s what makes us special. We live it and breathe it on a daily basis.”

INSPIRING MEDICINE To learn more about our neurology and stroke programs, call **1.800.3.ADVOCATE (1.800.323.8622)** or visit advocatehealth.com/christ.

Advocate Christ Medical Center’s Neurosciences Institute has not only top-flight physicians, but a nursing staff that ensures patient-focused care begins before patients even arrive.

“Patients are usually transferred to us when they need a higher level of care,” says Sandra Flood, RN (right), Neurosciences Institute outreach coordinator. “If they need surgical or radiologic intervention, we can provide those services.” As outreach coordinator, Flood is responsible for working with referring physicians to transfer their patients to Christ Medical Center and keeping them informed about their patients’ status and care.

Flood is one of the many highly-skilled team members at the Neurosciences

Institute, which also includes stroke coordinators Dee Behrens, RN, and Karen De Re, RN, and advanced practice nurses Lorri McCourt-O’Donnell, RN, APN and Dawn Merman, RN, APN. “We’re responsible for following up and making sure that patients are being given the appropriate care for stroke,” says Behrens. “We make sure that all the core measures are being followed. We also do family education—that’s one of our big roles. In a way, we are a liaison between the family and the physician.”

In addition to offering exceptional treatment options, Advocate Christ Medical Center is also delivering on its commitment to provide much-needed stroke education. The staff is actively involved in the stroke awareness program, participating in conferences, community health fairs and in-house programs.



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STEPHANIE’S DOC

Thomas Grobelny, MD, interventional neurologist, is a leading specialist in the use of endovascular techniques such as the Pipeline® Embolization Device.



The Pipeline® device (top) has the flexibility to be deployed in the tightest turns. As shown here, an aneurysm (near right) has been successfully controlled after placement of the embolization device (far right).

