



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Brianna Barnes
860-367-6187 (mobile)
Brianna.Barnes@TrinityHealthOfNE.org

Trinity Health Of New England Cardiovascular Surgeons Perform First Ever Convergent Procedure in Greater Hartford Region at Saint Francis Hospital

Saint Francis Hospital now offering the innovative procedure to treat patients with persistent atrial fibrillation.

HARTFORD, Conn. (May 6, 2021) – Cardiovascular surgeons at Saint Francis Hospital, a member of Trinity Health Of New England, performed the greater Hartford region’s first Convergent Procedure at the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute at Saint Francis. The Convergent Procedure is a collaborative effort between a cardiac surgeon and an electrophysiologist to effectively treat patients with persistent atrial fibrillation (AFib).

AFib is a quivering or irregular heartbeat. According to the American Heart Association, AFib is the most common heart arrhythmia disorder, with at least 2.7 million people living with AFib nationwide. It impacts adults of all ages, and if gone untreated can lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure, and other heart-related complications.

“We are excited to be able to offer this new addition to our Comprehensive AFib Management Program,” said Neal Lippman, M.D., Co-Section Chief, Regional Cardiac Electrophysiology Program, Trinity Health Of New England. “This allows us to better address AFib to improve patients’ symptoms, providing a better quality of life, as well as improving long-term results. The Convergent Procedure increases a patients’ success rate by 20% over catheterization alone. Data shows us this procedure is proving to be one of our most effective tools in our arsenal for those with persistent AFib, particularly when other treatments have been unsuccessful.”

Dr. Lippman and Robert Gallagher, M.D., Chief of Cardiac Surgery, Saint Francis Hospital and Regional Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Trinity Health Of New England performed the first procedure. Saint Francis is the only hospital in the greater Hartford region and one of just three hospitals in the state of Connecticut, as well as western Massachusetts, currently performing this procedure.

“The Convergent Procedure a hybrid model, combining a traditional catheter procedure with minimally invasive surgery and is used on patients in which a standalone catheter procedure or surgical procedure has not proven effective or is not anticipated to provide optimal outcomes,” explained Dr. Gallagher. “This unique approach to this challenging disease means, in many cases, patients have a new option.”

In the Convergent Procedure, a small incision is made in the upper abdomen, and a scope is used to visually detect the area that is then ablated, which produces scar tissue that blocks abnormal electrical signals, therefore restoring a normal heart rhythm. When that is completed, a catheter is placed through the leg to reach areas that are typically difficult to access with surgery alone. These procedures together are designed to stop the triggers to AFib.

“We are thrilled that we are able to offer hope to patients with severe AFib,” said Dr. Joseph Dell’Orfano, Regional Director of Electrophysiology, Trinity Health of New England. “In addition to now offering the Convergent Procedure, as part of our Comprehensive AFib Management Program we also work closely with primary care physicians to ensure patients are able to get AFib treatment started as early as possible. We know that combined with preventive care and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, early detection and early intervention is key to optimizing a patient’s outcomes.”

For more information about the [Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute](#) and all of the cardiovascular services available at Saint Francis Hospital, please visit www.TrinityHealthOfNE.org.

About Saint Francis Hospital

Saint Francis Hospital has been an anchor institution in Connecticut since 1897. Saint Francis is a member of Trinity Health Of New England and Trinity Health, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation. Saint Francis Hospital, a Level 1 Trauma Center, is a 617-bed hospital, a major teaching hospital, and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other Saint Francis entities include the Comprehensive Women’s Health Center, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, the Smilow Cancer Hospital Yale-New Haven at Saint Francis, Trinity Health Of New England Medical Group, and Community Health and Well Being, which includes the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, the Joan C. Dauber Food Pantry, and the Greater Hartford Family Advocacy Center. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @SaintFrancisCT