

AUBMC Cardiac Electrophysiology Team Performs a Novel operation in Lebanon using WATCHMAN Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device Implantation

(Thursday August 6, 2015) Beirut, Lebanon – The Cardiac electrophysiology team at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) performed on Tuesday July 7, 2015 a Watchman left atrial appendage closure device implantation on two consecutive patients with atrial fibrillation and high risk of bleeding.

This novel therapy performed on Lebanese patients by a Lebanese Cardiologist, Dr. Bernard Abi-Saleh and the cardiac electrophysiology team at AUBMC, helps patients who need to be on blood thinner for stroke prevention, secondary to atrial fibrillation, but have high risk of bleeding.

"We are so proud of this achievement," said Dr. Bernard Abi-Saleh, cardiac electrophysiologist at AUBMC. "This advanced technology will be truly life-changing for many atrial fibrillation patients freeing them from not only the dangers of stroke risk, but also the daily challenges of long-term blood-thinning medication therapy and the risk of bleeding these medications might carry," he added.

The WATCHMAN Device is FDA approved as a new stroke risk reduction option for high-risk patients with atrial fibrillation. It reduces the risk of stroke and offers an alternative to long-term anticoagulation therapy.

The WATCHMAN device, the size of a quarter and shaped like a parachute, is implanted into the heart to close off the left-atrial appendage, a blind pouch of heart tissue where blood clots form and can then break off and travel in the blood stream to the brain and cause strokes. The device is inserted into the heart through a vein in the leg during a one-time, minimally invasive, catheter-based procedure in the Electrophysiology Laboratory.

"This procedure is another proof of AUBMC being on track of achieving its 2020 vision, being the leading medical center in Lebanon and the region. The WATCHMAN Device is an important step forward in stroke prevention for patients with atrial fibrillation," said Dr. Abi-Saleh.

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About AUBMC

Since 1902, AUBMC has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine at AUB (established in 1867), which has trained generations of medical students and physicians, and whose graduates

can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the four international accreditations of JCI, Magnet, CAP, and ACGME-I attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, pathology/laboratory services and graduate medical education.

The Faculty of Medicine has graduated over 4,000 medical students and physicians; the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing provides excellent education for the nursing staff, and the Medical Center meets the health care needs of over 360,000 patient visits annually.

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