

Device Offers Hope for Some High-Risk Angioplasty and Heart Failure Patients

Leesburg Regional **one of the first** in Central Florida to offer TandemHeart

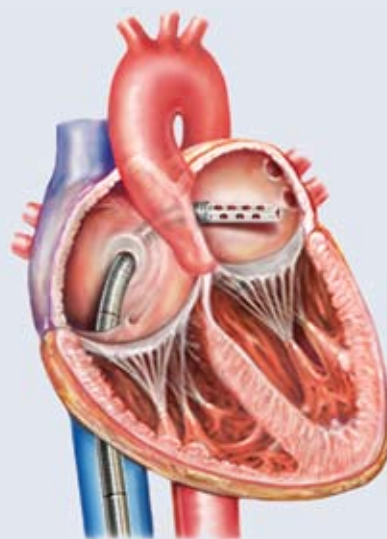
Patients with severe coronary artery disease who are not candidates for traditional stents or bypass surgery, now have hope in the form of a new assistive device, used only at Leesburg Regional Medical Center, part of Central Florida Health Alliance. The TandemHeart PTVA System, created by Cardiac Assist Inc., allows cardiologists to successfully transfer much of the heart's left ventricle work to a fist-sized machine that rests on the patient's thigh. Drs. Shrikanth Upadya and Vishnu Yelamanchi, interventional cardiologists, performed the first two procedures at Leesburg Regional.



Shrikanth Upadya, M.D.



Vishnu Yelamanchi, M.D.



The TandemHeart circulates the blood from the left atrium through flexible tubes.

work for it by pulling oxygenated blood out of the heart and back into the patient through another tube. This helps the heart to recover from a life-threatening myocardial infarction or could provide enough time to perform stents that would otherwise be ultra risky.”

Dr. Yelamanchi emphasizes, “This

device is only a temporary solution for use during interventional procedures and requires a specialized team, such as that found at the Alliance Heart Institute at Leesburg Regional. The TandemHeart requires a team of highly skilled operators from disciplines including cardiology, cardiothoracic surgery, perfusion, and nurses experienced with complex and high-risk cardiac patients. Candidates for the TandemHeart are carefully selected based on criteria that ensure the most successful outcome.”

Hawkins adds, “This is a great example of what we do best, bringing our physicians together to solve tough problems for our most challenging patients with the newest technologies.”

For more information on services offered at the Alliance Heart Institute, call (352) 323-1000 or toll free (800) 889-3755.

“We are pleased to be the first in the region to offer a nonsurgical heart-assisting pump to treat high-risk, fragile cardiac patient problems that couldn't otherwise be solved due to the high-level risk of repairing the arteries in the catheterization laboratory,” says Tim Hawkins, Senior Vice President of Clinical Services at Central Florida Health Alliance.

According to Dr. Upadya, “Traditional heart assist devices require major surgery. Very often, a patient is too ill to undergo such a serious procedure. This device can be inserted in the cardiac catheterization laboratory without doing surgery, which is the greatest benefit to the patient. The TandemHeart provides us with a new, reliable short-term option for these high-risk patients. It effectively bypasses the left ventricle of the heart and instead does the