Emory cardiologists are conducting lifesaving research. They need your help.

Emory Heart & Vascular Center
The Pulse of Progress

The Emory Heart & Vascular Center’s renowned experts combine their individual areas of expertise, their commitment to care, and their passion for discovery to offer each patient a dynamic, dedicated team of health care providers. Some of the most talented cardiothoracic surgeons, vascular surgeons, cardiac imaging experts, and cardiovascular physicians and scientists in the nation are at Emory. In fact, *U.S. News & World Report* consistently has ranked Emory among the top heart health centers.

**INNOVATION**

*Emory Heart & Vascular Center doctors have their fingers on the pulse of pioneering procedures that restore hope and health to heart patients. Where Emory leads, improved heart health follows.*

**New Lifesaving Procedure**

Among these procedures is a minimally invasive way to treat people with a common and potentially deadly condition called aortic stenosis. Of the 300,000 Americans with this condition, about a third are too frail or ill to undergo a standard open surgical approach because they suffer from other diseases such as diabetes, renal impairment, and vascular disease. Emory University Hospital is one of 23 hospitals in the nation to have conducted studies of this nonsurgical procedure—transcatheter aortic valve replacement. The FDA recently approved the procedure, giving doctors at Emory the green light to treat even more patients. Emory researchers are also studying use of the valve in a healthier population.

The procedure involves mounting a new valve on a catheter and inserting it either through a small incision in the groin or through the chest wall. “Both methods use a relatively thin catheter, about the size of your little finger,” says cardiologist Peter Block. “Once it is properly positioned, the new valve just moves the old one aside against the blood vessel wall and the blood can flow normally again.”

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Glenrose Gay of Vidalia, Georgia, was the first Emory heart patient to receive the new transcatheter aortic valve procedure. She is pictured here with Peter Block (left) and Vasilis Babaliaros.

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**ADVANTAGES OF TRANSCATHETER AORTIC VALVE REPLACEMENT**

- 20 percent lower mortality rates
- 90-minute procedure as opposed to four to six hours
- Can eliminate need for open heart surgery
- Reduces recovery time
- Lower infection rates
Because this procedure requires multiple areas of expertise, a multidisciplinary team, led by interventional cardiologists Vasilis Babaliaros and Peter Block and cardiothoracic surgeons Robert Guyton and Vinod Thourani, conducts the studies. Babaliaros spent several years abroad with the French cardiologist who successfully implanted the first catheter-delivered valve in 2002 in a seriously ill patient with aortic stenosis. Babaliaros learned the new approach and brought it to the United States and to Emory in 2007.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

Babaliaros earned his medical degree and did his residency at Emory. He then furthered his education and training by also completing a cardiology fellowship here, and he is a model of what that program makes possible.

Emory’s cardiology fellowship program is exemplary, and supporting a fellow is one of several ways you can help. Fellowships foster an appreciation for and a desire to focus on particular procedures or medical specialties. Fellows ensure that such procedures continue to be practiced, perfected, and improved by new generations of doctors, which in turn ensures the best in clinical care for patients. For other ways you can partner with us, see the blue box at left.

If you are interested in supporting our work, please contact:

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