Our hospital is one of first in U.S. to implant the absorbable device

Cardiologists at The University of Kansas Hospital are the first in Kansas and Missouri to implant a stent that slowly dissolves into a coronary blood vessel, protecting the heart while enhancing the free flow of blood.

Called the Absorb Biodegradable Vascular Scaffold System, the new device is similar to traditional metallic stents, except it dissolves in two to three years, allowing the blood vessel to regain some of its natural flexibility and movement.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the device in July after a pivotal 2 1/2-year clinical trial involving cardiologists here and around the country. The device already has been implanted in more than 150,000 patients in Europe, Latin America and Asian countries.

Our hospital now is one of about 50 heart centers in the U.S. using the Absorb scaffold. “This is the first big new-stent technology we’ve seen in several years,” said interventional cardiologist Mark Wiley, MD. “This new device’s ability to vanish over time is as close as science comes to magic.”

Conventional heart stents are tube-shaped metallic scaffolds that prop open vessels gummed up by plaque, dead cells and clotted blood that can lead to a heart attack or a stroke. More than half a million Americans receive one every year.

The Absorb scaffold is made of a biodegradable polymer, similar to the material in absorbable sutures. The new device also is coated with a medicine that helps prevent scarring and reclogging.

Wiley said the device gives patients an option that frees them from having a lifelong implant. It also benefits patients who need multiple stents over time.

The new device won’t replace all traditional stents. It’s especially suited for someone with a soft plaque lesion in a coronary blood vessel. Also, because it’s a new technology, the device is better suited for simple interventional procedures.

Our hospital implants 700 to 800 metallic stents a year. Wiley estimates 20 to 30 percent of those patients could qualify for the Absorb scaffold.

Cardiologists at our hospital, such as Ashwani Mehta, MD (left), and Cardiovascular Diseases fellow Andrew Waters, MD, are some of the first in the nation to implant the revolutionary new heart stent.

By the Numbers: Gunshot wounds

As the nation debates increased gun control, staff at The University of Kansas Hospital have seen no easing in the number of gunshot victims or severity of their injuries.

1,999

Number of people treated at our hospital for gunshot wounds since 2000 (through June 2016)

Gunshot victims 2000-2015

- Minor 1,158
- Moderate 225
- Major 243
- Severe 274
- Nonsurvivable 28

Gender:
- Male 86%
- Female 14%

Race:
- White 28%
- Black 51%
- Other 21%

Severity:
- Minor 1,158
- Moderate 225
- Major 243
- Severe 274
- Nonsurvivable 28

To suggest a By the Numbers, email Advances@kumc.edu.
Events

► Meditation in nature – Is your time in the garden “therapy” time? If so, join a meditation teacher (and passionate environmentalist) for a deep meditation workshop. Learn to connect to the healing energy of nature through your relationship to plants, trees and wildlife. No experience necessary. The workshop is 2-3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 30, in the outdoor garden (weather permitting) at Turning Point: The Center for Hope and Healing in Leawood. Call 913-574-0900 to register.

► Living with multiple myeloma – Sponsored by the International Myeloma Foundation, the workshop for patients and families features experts from The University of Kansas Cancer Center, University of North Carolina and the Mayo Clinic discussing myeloma basics, transplant, novel therapies and more. The free conference is 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10, in Overland Park. To register, call 800-452-2873 and ask for the Regional Community Workshop registration.

► Stroke Walk team – The University of Kansas Hospital is forming a team to participate in the 14th annual Stroke Walk, which is Saturday, Sept. 10, at Theis Park near the Country Club Plaza. It includes live music, a pancake breakfast and more. To join our team, go to americansstroke.org, select “The Stroke Walk,” then register and choose “The University of Kansas Hospital” from the drop-down menu.

► Ladies’ night – The University of Kansas Cancer Center is hosting a free Ladies’ Night Out series, with local lifestyle specialists and physicians discussing healthy living in a comfortable, supportive setting. The next session, “Girls Grill Too,” is 6-8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 20, at the South location (I-435 and Holmes Road). Get tips from grilling experts and learn about prostate cancer for the men in your life. Go to kucancercenter.org/lno or call 913-588-1227 to register and for more information.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Teaching young swimmers about sun risk

As summer winds down, staff at the Midwest Cancer Alliance can sleep well knowing they’re helping steer youngsters away from a future of skin cancer.

MCA, which is the outreach division of The University of Kansas Cancer Center, collaborates with the Kansas Cancer Partnership on a program called Kansas Pool Cool, which teaches children about sun safety.

The evidence-based program targets kids 5-10 years old as they take swimming lessons at community pools. Before each lesson, the kids receive several minutes of education about the importance of using sunscreen, wearing hats and choosing the shade when possible to avoid sunburns.

“The setting is ideal for instructors to describe the benefits of sun protection and the dangers of overexposure,” said Ashley Adorante, MCA outreach coordinator. “Skin cancer prevention is a lifetime effort that begins with good sun safety practices in childhood.”

Childhood sunburns are a dominant contributor later in life to melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer.

Adorante notes Pool Cool is a train-the-trainer program: MCA employees educate swim instructors, lifeguards and other aquatic staff about sun safety. They, in turn, teach the children – who often help educate their parents and others in their families, she said.

The program is free to participating pools. It launched three years ago in the Kansas City area and has since expanded to more than 50 pools across the state.

In addition to teaching kids about sun safety, those pools receive 1-gallon tubs of sunscreen and signage about sun safety. Pool patrons and staff also receive lip balm, sunglasses and wristbands that change colors when it’s time to reapply sunscreen.

Follow-up studies at the pools show participants have significantly better sun protection habits than their peers. The young swimmers seek shade more often and use sunscreen more regularly.

Parents also are more likely to practice sun safety after their kids’ participation in the program.

Pool Cool’s reach in Kansas has proved so successful the Centers for Disease Control this summer lauded it as one of its “Best Practice Stories” for cancer control.

EXPOSURE

Community support

As part of last week’s annual Hawk Week Community Service Day, 133 students from the University of Kansas Schools of Nursing and Health Professions volunteered at 14 different sites around Wyandotte County, including Shepherd’s Center, Friendship Inn, Giving the Basics and Rosedale Development Association’s Fisher Park. Their 532 volunteer hours amount to $12,533 in value to the state.
Celebrating with popcorn

Approximately 9,000 employees at The University of Kansas Hospital enjoyed popcorn bars (and yummy toppings) this week in celebration of the hospital’s impressive showing in U.S. News & World Report’s annual Best Hospitals lists. The hospital is nationally ranked (within the top 50 nationwide) in 11 medical specialties and, for the seventh consecutive year, was named best hospital in Kansas City.

In the News

A recap of recent articles, TV segments and other media coverage of the region’s leading academic medical center

► On smokes, communities side with cancer center – Shawnee Mission Post, Aug. 18. Mission Hills and Westwood, like other local communities, have approved ordinances raising the legal age to buy tobacco products to 21. Though no retailers in Mission Hills sell tobacco products, city officials said they embraced the restriction to support The University of Kansas Cancer Center in its effort to win Comprehensive Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute.

► Food commercials and kids’ impulses – Fox News Health, Aug. 16. Children make quicker decisions to eat “tasty” food after watching TV food commercials compared to nonfood commercials, according to a small study at the University of Kansas Medical Center. The researchers studied 23 children ages 8-14 who gave taste and health ratings for 60 food items. The kids then chose to “eat” or “not eat” each food item – without actually eating them – while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) brain scans. “Our past work has shown that reward centers of the brain ‘light up’ in response to familiar food and nonfood logos,” said Pediatrics’ Amanda Bruce, PhD. “What this study adds is we now have evidence that children’s decisions are based more on taste (less on healthiness) after watching a food commercial.”

► Coin toss shines spotlight on HPV – KCTV-5, Aug. 13. Tina Hillhouse survived stage III squamous cell carcinoma, caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). On Aug. 13, she served as honorary coin toss captain during the Kansas City Chiefs preseason game. The University of Kansas Cancer Center’s Kiran Kakarala, MD, joined Hillhouse to help raise awareness of HPV and the HPV vaccine.

► Those wacky Olympians – MSN, Aug. 8. Skier Lindsey Vonn caused a stir in the 2010 Winter Olympics when she put cheese curds on her injured shin. While not new, slathering cheese curds on injuries hasn’t been studied extensively. If such poultices do relieve swelling, it could be because of the medium-chain triglycerides in cheese curds. “The body does like these fats, which are like what is found in breast milk,” said Randy Evans, a registered dietitian at The University of Kansas Hospital. “They are very easily absorbed.”

Community college BSN effort expands

Nursing students across Kansas will now be able to complete a bachelor of science degree in nursing (BSN) without leaving their home communities.

Four Kansas community colleges are joining with the University of Kansas School of Nursing in a groundbreaking nursing education model allowing students to simultaneously earn their associate degree in nursing (ADN) and BSN. The community colleges are in Butler, Hutchinson, Johnson County and Neosho County. They join Kansas City Kansas Community College as participants in the unique program.

In May, two students from Kansas City Kansas Community College became the first pioneers to complete essentially the pilot program in the model. Both are now employed as nurses at The University of Kansas Hospital.

Though national approval for the program was granted just last week, 43 students from the five community colleges already have registered for it this fall.

“The partnership makes the transition much smoother for the student, while building relationships and capacity between the university and community college nursing efforts,” said Nelda Godfrey, PhD, RN, KU associate dean for innovative partnerships and practice.

“Ultimately, students can move easily through the pathway and achieve both degrees,” she added. “It’s a better, more efficient pipeline for educating nurses to meet growing workforce needs.”

Hey dude, research links weed, strokes

While the majority of Americans support legalizing the recreational use of marijuana, new research at the University of Kansas Medical Center and the University of Missouri-Kansas City indicates there could be a link between marijuana use and an increased chance of suffering a stroke.

Led by Manoj Mittal, MD, assistant professor in Neurology at our medical center, the team explored data collected by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality about nationwide hospital admissions. They used statistical software to control for other factors such as use of tobacco, alcohol, cocaine and amphetamines.

Compared with nonusers, they found marijuana users ages 15-54 were 17 percent more likely to be admitted to a hospital for acute ischemic stroke, the most common type. The difference was especially pronounced among users ages 25-34, who were 126 percent more likely to be admitted for that stroke.

The researchers point to tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the chemical responsible for most of marijuana’s psychological effects, which can cause blood vessels in the brain to spasm. Their research was published in the Journal of the Neurological Sciences.
Our People

► Honoring veterans – Congratulations to Emily Barnett-Doyle, RN, triage nurse coordinator in Patient Placement at The University of Kansas Hospital, who served as a guardian on a military honor flight this summer.

For the honor flight, Emily Barnett-Doyle, RN, escorted veterans Bob Stephens (from left), Everett Fisher Jr, and Tony Scudiero.

During the June 14 Honor Flight Network of Kansas City, she personally escorted three veterans through a daylong trip to Washington, D.C., and back.

Honor Flight Network is a nonprofit organization created solely to honor America’s veterans for their sacrifices. They received a heroes’ welcome at the gate in Washington, D.C., complete with a water cannon salute from the city’s fire department and a large celebration.

They visited memorials commemorating WWII, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, battle of Iwo Jima, and the Air Force, as well as the Arlington National Cemetery and Lincoln Memorial. During the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a special wreath ceremony was held for the Honor Flight veterans. The flight included 56 veterans and 46 guardians. As the only nurse on the American Airlines flight, Barnett-Doyle was available to address any of the veterans’ medical needs.

On the flight home, there was a surprise mail call for the vets. Each received a package of letters and cards written by family, friends and strangers. By 10:30 p.m., they arrived back in Kansas City to a large welcome-home party.

Barnett-Doyle, who is in the final year of her doctorate as an adult/geriatric nurse practitioner, said her clinical rotations at the Kansas City Veterans Administration Medical Center inspired her to participate in the honor flight.

To pay for her trip, she started a GoFundMe page. Donations not only covered her expenses but generated an additional $833, which she donated to the Honor Flight Network of Kansas City to fund future veteran trips.

Fact:
Here, I learned my risk was real.

Rich McArdle, heart disease survivor

Heart disease affects more people in the United States than all cancers combined. Genetic factors, lifestyle choices and certain health conditions can put you at risk. Our nationally acclaimed heart program is equipped to provide you the care you need, whether simple or complex.

Learn your risk by visiting kumed.com/heartquiz. Then, call 913-588-1227 to schedule an appointment.