



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute Celebrates 1,000th Watchman™ Procedure

PENSACOLA, Fla. (May 15, 2024) – Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute cardiologists, advanced practice providers and BHVI leadership gathered May 1 to celebrate the performance of its 1,000th Watchman™ procedure. The procedure is a potentially life-saving treatment for people with atrial fibrillation who are at risk for having a stroke.

“We’re excited about this tremendous milestone our team has reached,” said Beau Pollard, vice president and administrator for Baptist Hospital. “Our doctors have now provided this treatment that helps reduce the risk of stroke to 1,000 patients, and we’re proud to offer that level of experience and expertise for our patients.”

Patients who may be considered for the Watchman™ procedure have non-valvular atrial fibrillation and are at increased risk for stroke. Atrial fibrillation, or AFib, occurs when the upper chambers of the heart beat out of sync with the lower chambers, causing sporadic heart palpitations that can allow blood to stagnate in the left atrial appendage and eventually clot. These clots can break away and enter the bloodstream, causing a stroke. AFib patients are five times more likely to have a stroke.

The Watchman™ device is threaded through a vein in the leg and into the heart where it is implanted at the opening of the left atrial appendage. It serves as a barrier to prevent clots from entering the bloodstream. The procedure is performed under general anesthesia in the heart catheterization laboratory and usually lasts about an hour followed by a 24-hour hospital stay.

Baptist introduced the Watchman™ procedure to Northwest Florida in 2016. For more information about the Watchman™ and other treatment options available at Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute, visit ebaptisthealthcare.org/heart. For appointments, call 448.227.6500.

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For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, send an email to BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org or call 850.791.5254.

About Baptist Health Care

Baptist Health Care is a not-for-profit health care organization based in Northwest Florida that is committed to helping people throughout life's journey. Baptist continuously strives to be a national leader in quality and service. Baptist Health Care includes three hospitals, four medical parks, Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports

Medicine and a large network of primary care and specialty physicians. Baptist Health Care is one of the largest non-governmental employers in Northwest Florida.

- Baptist Health Care • Baptist Hospital • Gulf Breeze Hospital • Jay Hospital*
- Baptist Medical Parks Airport, Nine Mile, Navarre and Pace • Andrews Institute • Baptist Medical Group*
- Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute • Baptist Health Care Foundation*