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Indian River Medical Center Announces Interventional Stroke Program

Indian River Medical Center has launched an interventional stroke program in Vero Beach. IRMC has engaged the Arubah Neuroscience Institute with the goal of becoming a Comprehensive Stroke Center. The neuro-interventionalist team, including Drs. Ayman Gheith, Vikas Gupta and Akram Shhadeh, has begun treating ischemic strokes using a procedure known as mechanical thrombectomy.

An ischemic stroke is caused by a blood clot that blocks the flow of blood to portions of the brain, unlike a hemorrhagic

stroke which is caused by bleeding in the brain due to an aneurysm or a weakened blood vessel. Nearly 87% of strokes are ischemic. The mechanical thrombectomy, which has revolutionized ischemic stroke care in the United States, can treat even the most severe cases.

While not an option for all patients, mechanical thrombectomy uses a catheter to reach the blockage, and then entangles the clot in a wire mesh stent for removal. Each patient's recovery is individualized, but research clearly shows the procedure has positive results for one of every three patients if treated within 24 hours. This dramatically increases a patient's chances of returning to his or her pre-stroke health following the procedure.

"Our goal is to treat the patient as quickly as possible in order to achieve the best possible outcome," according to Dr. Ayman Gheith. "We feel so strongly about what we do because we've witnessed patients beginning to move their arms within minutes of removing the clot. Time equals brain, so this is a game-changer for stroke patients in this community to receive care faster than ever before."

IRMC is currently a Joint Commission Certified Primary Stroke Center and has received the American Heart

Association/American Stroke Association's Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. The addition of the highly trained, experienced interventional neurology team moves IRMC toward the goal of becoming a Comprehensive Stroke Center. Over the next year, IRMC will continue to elevate and increase capacity for stroke care with the expansion of procedure and recovery spaces and by augmenting technology.



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