Management of Severe Aortic Stenosis: What are the options?

Patients with severe, symptomatic aortic stenosis face a poor prognosis if their aortic valve is not replaced. Historically, replacing the aortic valve required open heart surgery during which the patient was placed on cardiopulmonary bypass while their native aortic valve was excised and replaced with a prosthetic valve. However, some patients were deemed too risky to undergo open-heart surgery. Over the last decade, transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), a less-invasive procedure that does not require a sternotomy or cardiopulmonary bypass, has been studied in a series of clinical trials compared to open-heart surgery. In 2011, the first TAVR device received FDA approval in the United States for patients that were too sick for open-heart surgery. Since then, TAVR valves received FDA-approvals for high-risk (2014) and intermediate-risk patients (2016). According to the STS/ACC TVT Registry™, in this country there are over 75,000 high and intermediate-risk patients, and this groups comprises approximately 15% of candidates for aortic valve replacement.

The remaining majority of patients with aortic stenosis are considered at low-risk for surgical aortic valve replacement, and TAVR has not been studied in this patient population. Now, cardiologists and surgeons on the medical staff at The Heart Hospital Baylor Plano (THHBP) are leading the PARTNER 3 clinical trial, an international multicenter trial to study the safety and effectiveness of TAVR compared with surgical aortic valve replacement in low-risk patients. Michael Mack, MD, a surgeon on the medical staff of The Heart Hospital Baylor Plano, is serving as the National Co-Principal Investigator of the PARTNER 3 Trial, providing oversight of the entire trial as it is conducted at more than 60 sites throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. David Brown, MD, an interventional cardiologist on the medical staff at The Heart Hospital Baylor Plano, is serving as the Local Principal Investigator at The Heart Hospital Baylor Plano, one of only four centers in Texas enrolling patients in the trial. Enrollment in the PARTNER 3 Trial began in March 2016 and is currently ongoing.
For additional information about clinical trials, contact the Research Office at 469.814.4720 or send an e-mail to Cecile.Mahoney@BSWHealth.org.

The Heart Team at THHBP has performed more than 1,200 TAVR procedures and continues to lead the nation in advancing and developing procedures to improve the outcomes of patients with a variety of heart diseases, including aortic stenosis. In recognition of the excellent outcomes of patients with aortic stenosis treated with surgery, The Heart Hospital was awarded the highest rating, 3-Stars by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, for aortic valve replacement and aortic valve replacement plus coronary artery bypass grafting.*

*The measurement period for Aortic Valve Replacement (AVR) and Aortic Valve Replacement (AVR) + Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG) spans the timeframe from July 2013 – June 2016.

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