Heart options
Non-surgical heart valve replacement choices expand for aortic stenosis

Lucille Kerchenfaut was told last spring that she needed to have one of her heart valves replaced and that there was only one option.

Her reaction: Relief.

The 82-year-old Vicksburg resident and retired registered nurse was not a candidate for traditional heart valve replacement surgery, which requires opening the chest to get access to her heart. Instead, she was a candidate for a relatively new procedure called Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), where the malfunctioning aortic valve is replaced via a relatively thin catheter that requires only a puncture in the groin area.

“The relief was because TAVR is less invasive,” she said.

On July 31, Frank Saltiel, MD, cardiologist, Borgess Heart Center for Excellence, along with members of the structural heart disease team, performed the TAVR procedure at Borgess Medical Center. Lucille received the latest heart valve now available for TAVR patients—Medtronic’s CoreValve.

Borgess Medical Center was the first hospital in the area to offer TAVR patients the choice of two heart valves—Edwards Lifescience’s Sapien 3 and Medtronic’s CoreValve. Lucille was one of the first CoreValve recipients.

“Each valve option has unique benefits for aortic stenosis patients who are not candidates for surgery,” said Dr. Saltiel. “Obviously, patient care benefits when more choices are available.”

Continued on page 2
Lucille was up and walking soon after the procedure and remained hospitalized for only four days. Her recovery was so quick that she didn’t need rehabilitation.

“I’m 100 percent now,” she said. “I’m back to normal.”

Lucille, who retired in 1997 as a rehabilitation staff nurse at Three Rivers Hospital, was always active.

Doctors had known for some time that she had a heart murmur and they had been monitoring her condition all along. When the murmur grew louder in 1998, an echocardiogram was done and showed that she had aortic valve stenosis, where the valve narrows and impedes normal blood flow.

Doctors informed Lucille she would ultimately need surgery.

Another echocardiogram in December 2014 showed worsening of her stenosis.

“In 2014, I started having more shortness of breath walking up and down stairs,” Lucille said. “And some chest pain, too, and fatigue.”

Another echocardiogram in May 2015 showed additional stenosis.

After a heart catheter study in early spring, Dr. Saltiel, implanted three cardiovascular stents to prop open narrowed heart arteries.

Not a candidate for heart valve surgery

It was about that time that her doctors determined that she was not a candidate for surgical heart valve replacement. Lucille had breast cancer when she was 24 and underwent six weeks of radiation therapy. She also had rheumatic fever as a child. Rheumatic fever and intense radiation therapy were conditions that likely contributed to the deterioration of her valve and would make the healing process slow and difficult if she had undergone open-heart surgery.

That’s when the TAVR option was suggested.

TAVR was approved in the United States only four years ago. In the procedure, a catheter is inserted through an artery, usually in the groin, to the heart and a tiny balloon is inflated in the middle of the aortic heart valve, squeezing it to the side, Dr. Saltiel said.

A replacement valve that fits the site of the native valve is put in place using another catheter.

“The only pain I had after the procedure was my arthritis,” Lucille said. “I received excellent care at Borgess. My doctors were wonderful and the nurses and everybody else on the care team were so nice. They all made me feel confident. “I’m an active person and I didn’t like being tired,” Lucille said. “I wanted a good quality of life.”

That good quality of life, Dr. Saltiel said, is a main goal of medicine.

“We want to help patients to be active and return to their full lifestyle without undo strain,” Dr. Saltiel said. “With TAVR, we can do that without open-heart surgery. We’re lucky to have this less-invasive procedure and now more than one TAVR option.”

The procedure worked so well on Lucille, he said, that she probably won’t need a lot of monitoring unless her symptoms return.

“The procedure is too new to precisely know long-term results,” Dr. Saltiel said, “but we probably can expect it to last 10 years. If needed, it can be repeated.”
Help is needed to honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Monday, January 18.

This year, Borgess associates will team up with Bronson employees, and Western Michigan University Health and Human Resources department volunteers to engage in a community service initiative on this special holiday.

“We want to use the MLK national holiday as an opportunity for Borgess Health associates to actively engage with the Kalamazoo community,” said Sr. Sue McCrery, Spiritual Care Specialist, Mission Integration, Borgess Health. “We will celebrate and connect with others by providing career exposure to 8th-grade students at Kalamazoo’s Milwood Magnet School and also offer basic clinical services to the most vulnerable.”

The project will also include an educational component that will promote interactive activities with 8th grade students at Kalamazoo’s Milwood Magnet School. The “Career Cruising at Milwood Magnet School” will engage the students in six-to-eight-minute hands-on activities designed to introduce them to the health care profession.

**Career Cruising**

Career Cruising will focus on 8th-grade students at Kalamazoo’s Milwood Magnet School, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., January 18. It is an opportunity to help with a hands-on program where students use their iPads to learn more about the health care profession. Students might learn about educational and clinical preparations for working in health care, or research various tools or equipment utilized in a health care workplace.

**Health Clinics**

Health clinics will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, 448 N. Burdick St., Kalamazoo. Borgess CorpFit will offer blood pressure checks, as well as education about diabetes, heart care, winter weather protection and more. CorpFit will also provide similar clinic services from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Ministry with Community, 440 N. Church St., Kalamazoo.

The MLK community service activities will conclude with a celebration 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., in the Grand Ballroom and Lobby of Kalamazoo’s Radisson Plaza Hotel.

“Associates are needed at this event that helps our community,” said Sr. Sue.

For information on MLK Community Service opportunities and observances, contact Sr. Sue McCrery at (269) 226.7061 or sue.mccrery@borgess.com.
A Good Day

Shawn Shuler, RN, describes December 21 as a “Good Day.”

It was a day when the operating room nurse helped save two lives in out-of-the-ordinary circumstances within Borgess Medical Center.

At 7:30 a.m., a fellow nurse collapsed on the fifth floor hallway of the Borgess Medical Center surgical unit.

“It was a shock to see a young person I’ve known and appreciated for years suddenly fall to the floor and become unresponsive,” Shawn said. “However, as a nurse, we call upon our experience and training to help others. It’s certainly happened before, once when fishing with my son.”

Shawn called a code, checked for pulse and performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The fellow nurse regained consciousness and received additional, essential care at the insistence of Shawn and others.

At 3:15 p.m., while in the Borgess cafeteria, a visitor asked Shawn to look at a woman who had suddenly slumped in her chair. It was necessary for Shawn to again call a code and perform CPR. A Code Team soon came with an AED and the visitor was revived.

“Shawn is a provider of compassionate care for everyone—jumping to the aid of a colleague, rushing to support a stranger, and offering day-to-day care in the Operating Room,” said Holly Mitchell, RN, Surgery Clinical Manager. “He is a team member who makes us all proud.”

The good day has continued for both patients, who have expressed their appreciation to Shawn with tears and smiles.

Borgess Christmas Wishes helped associates

It was a very Merry Christmas this year for many Borgess Medical Center associates with the help of Borgess Christmas Wishes, an anonymous program for associates and their families. Gift tags describing a wish for an anonymous associate were placed on Christmas trees at Borgess for associates who wanted to purchase gifts for colleagues whom they knew would be lacking Christmas gifts for their families.

“Borgess Christmas Wishes was an excellent idea suggested by Amanda Russon of the Patient Transport Department at Touchpoint,” said Sr. Sue McCrery, Spiritual Care Specialist, Mission Integration.

Over 400 unwrapped gifts, with corresponding gift tags attached, were delivered to Borgess Spiritual Care where volunteers sorted and wrapped them. The gifts ranged from gift cards of $25 and up, to toys and clothing for children and adults. One recipient responded: “Thank you so much. My daughter and I appreciate everything. God bless you all!”

Groups included:

DeLano Clinic
Borgess Lee Medical Group
Borgess Family & Internal Medicine – Crosstown
Borgess Rheumatology
Borgess ProMed at Richland
Borgess Surgical Services
Borgess Heart Institute
ProMed Peds, Woodbridge
ProMed FP, Woodbridge
ProMed FP, Three Rivers

BMG Administration, Stadium Dr.
Borgess Cardiothoracic Surgery
Borgess Coding & Data Integrity
Borgess Diabetes & Endocrinology
Borgess Orthopedics
Neurosurgery of Kalamazoo

Top 2015 Gorgeous Borgess baby names:

GIRLS: Isabella, Lilly, Aubrey, Olivia, Sophia
BOYS: Oliver, Colton, Jaxon, Rowan, Aiden

SMARTHEALTH WELLNESS WEBINARS—learn everything you need to know about the 2016 Employee Wellness Program

Learn everything you need to know about the 2016 Employee Wellness Program from signing-up to tracking points. Join Lindsay Tuhacek, Health & Wellness Coordinator, January 6, 2016, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., or January 12 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., or 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., for the SmartHealth Wellness 101 webinar. Go to the Borgess Intranet for login details or check with your supervisor for an email with the information you need to attend.