



INSTITUT JANTUNG NEGARA
National Heart Institute

MEDIA RELEASE

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IJN UNVEILS FIRST IN MALAYSIA PROCEDURE FOR AORTIC STENOSIS

KUALA LUMPUR, 12 June 2023 — Marking another stride forward in cardiovascular medicine, Institut Jantung Negara (IJN) has introduced a ground-breaking medical procedure that promises to redefine aortic stenosis treatment.

The procedure involves the latest-generation device for transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) called Navitor™. TAVI is a minimally-invasive treatment option for aortic stenosis patients who are at high risk for conventional open-heart surgery. Created by global medical company Abbott, the Navitor™ aims to improve upon existing TAVI procedures by including advancements which reduce the risk of blood leakages around the valve implant. The TAVI procedure offers a minimally-invasive alternative to surgery, with faster recovery rates and reduced pain. The procedure involves inserting a replacement valve via a catheter through a small incision in the femoral artery in the groin.

The Navitor™ refines TAVI through its unique design aimed at increasing precision and improving patient outcomes. The device features a fabric cuff that reduces or eliminates the backflow of blood around the valve frame. In addition to facilitate blood flow through the aortic valve, the device is also the only self-expanding TAVI system with leaflets within the native valve annulus, making it easier to access a person’s coronary arteries for future treatments. This is a new important aspect of TAVI therapy for the treatment of more intermediate and low risk younger patients who may need future coronary interventions. The Navitor™ also comes with the smallest profile, allowing doctors to use smaller access blood vessels of 5mm and above.

Two patients underwent Navitor™ TAVI procedure at IJN on May 12th 2023, making the heart specialist centre the first health provider in Malaysia to successfully perform this innovative treatment. This further builds on IJN’s capabilities in the TAVI space, following the centre’s achievement of being the first in Asia to introduce the self-expandable TAVI in 2009. Currently IJN is offering four types of TAVI system to aortic stenosis patients with specific needs.

Aortic stenosis occurs when the opening of the heart’s aortic valve becomes narrowed, restricting the blood flow from the heart to the rest of the body. Severe instances of the condition are characterised by symptoms such as chest pain, fainting spells, rapid heartbeat, and shortness of breath. Left untreated, aortic stenosis can lead to heart failure and death.

Previously, valve replacement via surgery was the only method to treat serious aortic stenosis cases. However, especially as the condition tends to afflict older populations, not all patients are able to undergo open-heart surgery.

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Those who are considered high risk for open-heart surgery include patients living with other comorbidities such as heart failure, diabetes mellitus and renal disease.

“These design improvements go a long way in helping us treat aortic stenosis more efficiently and accurately, with better long-term outcomes.” said IJN senior consultant cardiologist Datuk Dr Shaiful Azmi Yahaya. “Current research indicates that these design features minimise patient-prosthesis valve mismatch and enable us to manage any future coronary interventions. The small profile also will enable us to treat smaller patients in our elderly population.”

Meanwhile, IJN chief executive officer Datuk Dr Aizai Azan Abdul Rahim said the centre hoped to introduce even more transformative treatment options for patients in the near future. “We’re committed to continue pushing the boundaries of medical innovation and offer a renewed sense of hope and healing for those in need. I’d also like to thank our medical team for their unwavering dedication to realising this mission, and keeping us at the forefront of cardiovascular care.”

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About Institut Jantung Negara Sdn. Bhd.

Institut Jantung Negara (IJN) was set up in 1992 and is dedicated to the management and treatment of heart diseases by providing cardiology, paediatric cardiology and cardiothoracic surgery services for adults and children.

Today, IJN is reckoned to be among the best medical centres for cardiovascular and thoracic care in Malaysia and the region. IJN has kept abreast with the latest medical advances, from handling a simple hole in the heart surgery to heart and lungs transplantations.

With a strong commitment to be a global heart care centre of excellence, IJN has paved the way by creating many “firsts” for cardiovascular and thoracic care in the country.

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