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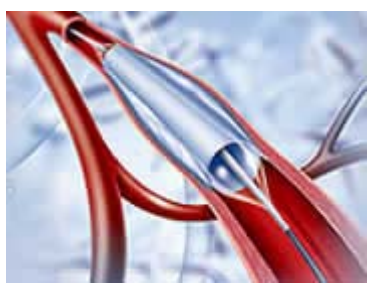
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CRYOPLASTY OPENS ARTERIES WITHOUT STENTS

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(03-29-2004) - These days, stents are getting a lot of attention as a treatment for clogged arteries. But a new method can do the same thing – without the stent. We had a unique opportunity to

watch this new procedure as it was performed in San Diego for the first time.

Fifty-nine-year-old David Reardon is making history here in San Diego. He's the first patient to undergo a new treatment to help him overcome peripheral vascular disease.

"PVD is a narrowing of the arteries, and it can happen anywhere from the aorta to the pelvis down to the leg and the foot," said Dr. Thomas Terramani of Sharp Grossmont Hospital.

In David's case, he had a 90 percent blockage in the artery behind his knee. The lack of blood flow ruined his quality of life.

"I was completely restricted in the amount of time I could do any job without sitting down approximately every 15 minutes," he explained.

So when Terramani, a vascular surgeon, approached him with a new treatment option called cryoplasty, David jumped at the chance.

"I don't think he had to sell it, I think it sold itself," he said.

Cryoplasty works much like a traditional balloon angioplasty, with a



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few unique differences. First of all, there is no mesh stent involved. Secondly, the balloon that is used has liquid nitrogen inside, instead of saline. When it's inflated in the artery, the chemical drops the temperature down to minus ten degrees Celsius - or below freezing.

"As the balloon blows up the area it freezes the cells in that adjacent area and those cells tend to go through a process called apoptosis or 'programmed cell death,'" said Terramani. "Those cells in that area, instead of becoming very inflamed and angry, they basically just die off and do not create the re-narrowing of the artery in that location."

David was awake during the entire process, and was able to go home just two hours after his procedure was finished. In just two weeks' time, he's back to his old ways, walking in his neighborhood and tending to his yard.

"At one point in time both my feet were frozen cold," he said. "Within the next day, now I have warm feet, it's the first time in a long time and that's a blessing.

David says he feels much better now, and encourages others with peripheral vascular disease to find out if this procedure might be right for them.

Right now, Sharp Grossmont Hospital is the only place in San Diego where you can have it done. Doctors say 85 percent of patients report excellent results after one year, and if the artery narrows, it is possible to do the procedure again.

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