



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

100th Watchman™ Procedure Performed by Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute

PENSACOLA, Fla. (May 23, 2018) – Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute (BHVI) has performed its 100th Watchman™ procedure. The procedure was completed May 17.

“This is a tremendous milestone for BHVI and a great benefit to the people in the Northwest Florida area who need this level of advanced care,” said Victor Hall, vice president, Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute. Patients who may be considered for the Watchman™ procedure have non-valvular atrial fibrillation, issues with long-term warfarin use and are at increased risk for stroke.

Atrial fibrillation, or AFib, occurs when the upper chambers of the heart beat out of coordination with the lower chambers, causing sporadic heart palpitations that can allow blood to stagnate in the left atrial appendage (LAA) and eventually clot. These clots can break away and enter the blood stream, causing a stroke. AFib patients are five times greater risk for stroke. Because of this risk, many AFib patients take warfarin, an anti-coagulant or blood thinner.

The Watchman™ device is a self-expanding nickel titanium frame with fixation anchors and is covered by a surgical fabric (it looks like a tiny jelly fish). The device can be threaded through a vein in the leg and into the heart where it is implanted at the opening of the LAA. This serves as a barrier to prevent clots from entering into the blood stream. The procedure is performed under general anesthesia in the catheterization laboratory and usually lasts about an hour followed by a 24-hour hospital stay.

For more videos about Watchman™ LAA closure and other procedures available at the Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute, visit <http://www.ebaptisthealthcare.org/Heart/videos>. For appointments call 850.484.6500.

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For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, please contact 850.791.5254 or BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org.

About Baptist Health Care

Baptist Health Care is a community-owned, not-for-profit health care organization committed to improving the quality of life for people and communities in northwest Florida. The organization is a proud member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. A 2003 Malcolm Baldrige recipient, Baptist continuously strives to be a national leader in quality and service. Baptist Health Care includes three hospitals, two medical parks, Andrews Institute for Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine, Lakeview Center, Baptist Medical Group and Cardiology Consultants. With more than 6,500 employees and employed physicians, Baptist Health Care is the largest non-governmental employer in northwest Florida. For more information, please visit www.eBaptistHealthCare.org.

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