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Dr. William Kaiser performs breakthrough below-the-knee stent procedure



Pictured above: Vascular surgeon Dr. William Kaiser (fourth from left) with his operating room team at Tift Regional Medical Center.

(September 27, 2024, Tifton, Georgia) — Vascular surgeon William Kaiser, MD, FACS with Tift Regional Vascular recently performed a revolutionary new procedure at Tift Regional Medical Center that enhances the level of treatment for below-the-knee (BTK) chronic limb-threatening ischemia (CLTI). The procedure, called the Esprit BTK system, was just approved by the FDA in April.

“This is a first-of-its-kind procedure that involves the placement of a drug-eluting stent that dissolves over time after it has opened blocked arteries below the knee,” said Dr. Kaiser. “The stent device is implanted during a catheter-based minimally invasive procedure via a small incision in the leg. Once the blockage is open, the Esprit BTK scaffold helps heal the vessel and provides support for approximately three years until the vessel is strong enough to remain open on its own.”

Until recently, there were no stents or drug-coated balloons approved for use below the knee in the U.S.

“The standard of care has been balloon angioplasty, which relies on a small balloon delivered via a catheter to the blockage to compress it against the arterial wall, opening the vessel and restoring blood flow,” he stated. “However, blockages treated only with balloon angioplasty have poor short- and long-term results, and in many instances the vessels become blocked again, requiring additional treatment.”

More than 20 million people in the U.S. are living with peripheral artery disease (PAD), yet there have been limited treatment options. The Esprit BTK System, with its dissolving stent, offers the possibility of better outcomes for people with the most severe form of PAD.

“Patients with CLTI, the terminal stage of PAD, are frequently afflicted by below-the-knee disease,” said Dr. Kaiser. “Although all patients should receive guideline-directed medical therapy, restoration of inline flow is often times necessary to avoid limb loss. The Esprit BTK system really takes this treatment to a new, higher level. We are proud to be able to bring this advanced treatment to South Central Georgia, close to home, family, and work for patients.”

After earning his medical degree from New York Medical College in Valhalla, New York, Dr. Kaiser completed residency training at Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon, Georgia and fellowship training at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, Maryland. He is certified in vascular surgery by the American Board of Surgery.

Tift Regional Vascular, a service of Southwell, is located in Tifton at 1641 Madison Avenue. For more information, call 229-353-2284 or visit www.MySouthwell.com.

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About Southwell

Southwell is a leading integrated healthcare system dedicated to delivering quality and compassionate care in South Georgia. Southwell includes Tift Regional Medical Center, Southwell Medical, Southwell Health and Rehabilitation, and more than thirty-five (35) outpatient diagnostic and treatment facilities, physician clinics, and endoscopy procedure centers. Please visit www.MySouthwell.com for more information.