

Geriatrics



The exemplary team of physicians, caregivers and researchers at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in patient care through meaningful medical advancements and notable clinical achievements. This document highlights just a few of the stories that reflect our commitment to advanced services, innovative technology and forward-thinking care. Together, these accomplishments demonstrate how we remain at the forefront of medicine—bringing leading-edge solutions, improved outcomes and exceptional care to the patients and communities we serve.

Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center at the forefront of understanding, better treatments for age-related bone fragility.

The integration of translational research and innovation into orthopedic clinical care, as seen in the Fragility Fracture Program, sets Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center apart as a top-tier academic health care institution.

Baylor St. Luke's Center for Skeletal Medicine and Biology investigates the complex interactions between the brain and bone cells. The Center's researchers study the contribution of autonomic nerves to the progressive bone loss experienced in every individual as a function of aging, beginning in the third decade of life.

Through targeted studies, Baylor St. Luke's researchers have been able to demonstrate that drugs, safely used for the management of cardiovascular diseases, have a protective effect against the bone fragility associated with aging. These findings have direct implications in the care of elderly fracture patients.

The highly integrated, multidisciplinary Fragility Fracture team at Baylor St. Luke's includes specialists in geriatrics, physical medicine and rehabilitation, and other subspecialties. These experts provide individualized care for fragility fracture

patients, emphasizing minimally invasive fracture stabilization and post-operative mobilization.

Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center is an internationally recognized leader in research and clinical excellence that has given rise to breakthroughs in cardiovascular care, neuroscience, oncology, transplantation, and more. Our team's efforts have led to the creation of many research programs and initiatives to develop advanced treatments found nowhere else in the world.

Our strong alliance with Baylor College of Medicine allows us to bring our patients a powerful network of care unlike any other. Our collaboration is focused on increasing access to care through a growing network of leading specialists and revolutionizing healthcare to save lives and improve the health of the communities we serve.

Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center is also the first hospital in Texas and the Southwest designated a Magnet® hospital for Nursing Excellence by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, receiving the award five consecutive times.

81-year-old is first in Houston to receive Resilia Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement.

Dorothy Semon, 81, lived her life as a very active person. A former wedding coordinator, she loves being with people, working, and traveling. But things started slowing down when her aortic heart valve failed, causing shortness of breath and fatigue. After three years it worsened to the point that she could no longer walk short distances. “I couldn’t even walk from my front door to the mailbox without getting out of breath,” she recalled.

As a senior patient, Dorothy was not a candidate for open heart surgery, which would have required anesthesia for several hours with a lengthy and potentially challenging recovery.

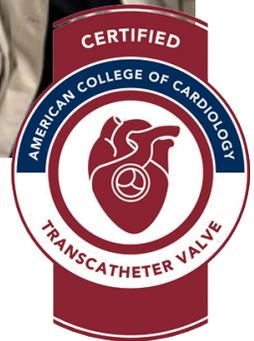
She was referred to Baylor St Luke’s Medical Center in Houston and the care of Interventional Cardiologist Neil E. Strickman, MD, FACC, FSCAI, FACP, who recommended a transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) using a new valve coated with “Resilia” a product that has been proven to retard calcification of the leaflets of the valve as well as decrease degeneration of this bioprosthetic heart valve.

Dorothy is the first patient in Houston and CommonSpirit Health to receive the new technology. And, it was implanted into Dorothy’s heart without major surgery.

The procedure took only an hour and Dorothy immediately felt better. “I was no longer out of breath. All my vitals were good.”

Dorothy said the procedure was so minimally invasive that she can’t even find the scar anymore. “I stayed one night in the hospital and they asked me to stay in the area for the next night then we got on the road and drove five hours back to our home in Shreveport, Louisiana. It was unbelievable,” she said.

Dorothy is on a course of pulmonary therapy and is feeling better every day. She stopped using a walking cane just weeks after the procedure.



Dorothy’s successful procedure should be encouraging to others with aortic valve conditions. “As we move forward with new technology we will be able to offer the best valve product available to high surgical-risk patients to increase not only their quality of life but also their longevity,” Dr. Strickman said. The new device will help younger patients who can feel comfortable that their first-time valve will last for years, patients whose old valve has worn out and patients with end-stage renal disease that are on dialysis who tend to experience calcifications more quickly.

Dr. Strickman says Dorothy’s prognosis with this new coated valve is “really good, She has a new lease on life. It’s a chance to live longer with less complications.”

Dorothy is walking longer distances now and she is looking forward to the day when she can work in her garden. She and her husband, Phillip, are looking forward to visiting with family who live out of state. “I’m excited to have her breathing back to being normal instead of laboring,” Phillip says. “We’re real pleased with Baylor St. Luke’s, the procedure, and the outcome.”

Palliative Medicine

Our geriatric staff coordinates medical, social, and hospice services for patients and families facing terminal illnesses. Pain management and control of other symptoms is a priority in ensuring optimal patient comfort. Assistance is provided in establishing advance directives, selective resuscitation status, and designating a power of attorney.

Care plans are individualized to the needs of the patient and family, with a focus on maximizing quality of life and comfort. House calls are offered to select patients in the geographic area who are no longer able to seek medical care in the office or clinic setting.

New, longer-lasting biosynthetic heart valve device for replacing diseased aortic valve offers excellent outcomes for senior and high-risk patients.

A new technology that strengthens the durability and lifespan of artificial heart valve implants offers senior patients with aortic stenosis and those with advanced heart disease a new lease on life.

Using a bioprosthetic valve coated with “Resilia,” a product that has been proven to retard calcifications and decrease degeneration of the artificial heart valve, surgeons at Baylor St Luke’s Medical Center have successfully implanted the device in an 81-year-old woman with advanced aortic heart valve failure.

As a senior patient, Dorothy was not a candidate for open heart surgery, which would have required anesthesia for several hours with a lengthy and potentially challenging recovery. Instead, surgeons performed a transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), a minimally invasive procedure used to treat aortic stenosis, a narrowing of the aortic valve that blocks blood flow to the rest of the body. The condition forces the heart to work harder and causes symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, and fatigue.

Dorothy is the first patient in Houston and CommonSpirit Health to receive the new “Resilia”-coated device. And, it was implanted into Dorothy’s heart without major surgery. The TAVR procedure she underwent took only an hour and required just a one-night stay in the hospital. And as a minimally invasive procedure, there was no visible scar left behind.

“As we move forward with new technology we will be able to offer the best valve product available to high surgical-risk patients to increase not only their quality of life but also their longevity,” noted Baylor St. Luke’s Interventional Cardiologist Neil E. Strickman, MD, FACC, FSCAI, FACP, who recommended the procedure.

The new “Resilia” technology will also help younger patients who can feel comfortable that their first-time valve will last for years, patients whose old valve has worn out, and dialysis patients with end-stage renal disease, who tend to experience calcifications more quickly.

Leading Geriatric Research

Our geriatric research efforts expand into multiple disciplines, including oncology, cardiology, neurology, psychiatry, and more.

In collaboration with the Huffington Center on Aging at Baylor College of Medicine, one of the most advanced centers on aging research in the nation, our

team is heavily involved in the study areas of memory and mood. Protocols include frailty assessments of older lung and liver transplant patients and nutrition therapies to improve function. We also participate in experimental medication trials focused on cognition.