

**TO MEDIA:**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EXCELA HEALTH OFFERING BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGY  
FOR CAROTID ARTERY DISEASE TO HELP PREVENT STROKE**

*TCAR Procedure Offers Patients Less-Invasive Treatment Option*

**GREENSBURG, PA, MAY 2021** ... Vascular surgeons at Excelsa Health are among the first in western Pennsylvania to treat carotid artery disease and prevent future strokes using a new procedure called TransCarotid Artery Revascularization (TCAR). TCAR (tee-kahr) is a clinically proven, minimally invasive and safe approach for high surgical risk patients who need carotid artery treatment. Carotid artery disease is a form of atherosclerosis, or a buildup of plaque, in the two main arteries in the neck that supply oxygen-rich blood to the brain. If left untreated, carotid artery disease can often lead to stroke; it is estimated to be the source of stroke in up to a third of cases, with 427,000 new diagnoses of the disease made every year in the United States alone.

“TCAR is an important new option in the fight against stroke, and is particularly suited for the patients we see who are at higher risk of complications from carotid surgery due to age, anatomy or other medical conditions,” said Excelsa Health vascular surgeon Elizabeth Detschelt, MD. “Because of its low stroke risk and faster patient recovery, I believe TCAR represents the future of carotid repair.”

Patients often learn they have carotid artery disease following an abnormal carotid duplex, an ultrasound test that shows how well blood is flowing through the carotid arteries. Some individuals can manage carotid artery disease with medications and lifestyle changes. However, more severe cases may require surgery to repair the blockage in the artery. While any repair of the carotid artery carries some risk of causing a stroke because of the intervention itself, TCAR was designed to help lower that risk.

TCAR is unique in that blood flow is temporarily reversed during the procedure so that any small bits of plaque that may break off are diverted away from the brain, preventing a stroke from happening. During the procedure, a small incision is made just above the collarbone and a special tube is inserted into the carotid artery. That tube allows for the flow reversal and also for placement of a stent inside the artery to stabilize the plaque, minimizing the risk of a future stroke.

“Given my history of vascular disease, I was happy to learn there were still treatment options for me,” said 56-year-old Matthew Daniel of Westmoreland City, who has been under Dr. Detschelt’s care for several years. “I was out of the hospital the day after the procedure with a much smaller scar than I expected.”

Prior to TCAR, the main treatment option for severe carotid artery disease was an open surgical procedure called carotid endarterectomy (CEA). CEA removes plaque from inside the carotid artery to restore normal blood flow to the brain, but the large incision leaves a visible scar the length of the neck and carries risks of surgical complications, including bleeding, infection, heart attack and cranial nerve injuries that can cause issues with swallowing, speaking and sensation in the face.

Daniel had previously undergone CEA, or as he referred to it, “carotid cleaning”, and enthusiastically anticipated the less-invasive TCAR procedure performed in Excelsa Health’s hybrid operating room at Excelsa Health Westmoreland Hospital. “Dr. Detschelt explained the new procedure in detail and the benefits to me given my ongoing health risks. I am grateful that Excelsa Health has this advanced level of care and less than 15 minutes from my home.”

The TCAR procedure was developed by Sunnyvale, California-based Silk Road Medical, Inc. and includes the ENROUTE® Transcarotid Neuroprotection (NPS) and Stent System – the first devices designed and FDA-approved specifically for TCAR.

Over 20,000 TCAR procedures have been performed worldwide through clinical trial and commercial use. TCAR has been studied extensively, and the clinical data have been excellent. Additional information about TCAR is available at

<http://silkroadmed.com/disease-and-treatment-options/>.