

St. Thomas Hospital first to offer new tech for congestive heart failure treatment

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Saint Thomas Hospital has announced the addition of Aquapheresis Therapy using the Aquadex FlexFlow system to its latest advancement in the treatment of heart failure patients with fluid overload. For heart failure patients suffering from fluid overload, time is of the essence. Excess fluid builds up in various locations in a patient's body and eventually, can lead to a reduction in the amount of oxygen entering the blood causing shortness of breath and fatigue.

"With the implementation of this new treatment protocol, we are able to reduce the time it takes to treat heart failure patients," said Beth Davidson, Ph.D., nurse practitioner with Saint Thomas Heart. "The faster we're able to get the patients breathing easier, the better their outcomes, as well as a reduction in their length of stay."

Fluid overload refers to a condition in which excess salt and water accumulates throughout a patient's body. In



Aquadex FlexFlow system

fact, this excess fluid is what puts the 'congestive' in congestive heart failure and is the cause of the most obvious and common symptoms seen. Inefficient pumping or relaxation of the heart can lead to a buildup of excess fluid, which accumulates in the lungs, liver and extremities, causing shortness of breath, decreased function of vital organs and

swelling of the extremities.

CHF is a condition that affects approximately five million Americans and is responsible for one million annual hospitalizations.

Saint Thomas Hospital is a member of Saint Thomas Health Services, a faith-based ministry with more than 8,000 associates serving Middle Tennessee. Saint Thomas Health Services' regional health system consists of five hospitals—Baptist and Saint Thomas Hospitals and the Center for Spinal Surgery in Nashville, Middle Tennessee Medical Center in Murfreesboro and Hickman Community Hospital in Centerville—and a comprehensive network of affiliated joint ventures in diagnostics, cardiac services and ambulatory surgery as well as medical practices, clinics and rehabilitation facilities. STHS is a member of Ascension Health, a Catholic organization that is the largest not-for-profit health system in the United States.