

# Minimally invasive mitral surgery. Safer, less painful, more functional

Many cases of mitral valve disease are not diagnosed and treated correctly, resulting in a vast number of patients diagnosed with this disease not being referred for surgery. Presently the best treatment option is surgery.

**H**owever, even when patients are referred for surgery this is normally carried out by sternotomy (open heart surgery). This option apart from the risks involved, has a painful and extensive post operative recovery period.

The best option is minimally invasive valve surgery, which is performed through small incisions in the intercostals spaces, ensuring a safe and rapid recovery period, resulting in a better quality of life for the patient.

Minimally invasive surgery, unlike conventional surgery is carried out using endoscopic video techniques and introducing various instruments through small holes.

Performing a surgical procedure through small holes instead of resorting to extensive open wound surgery results in better cosmetic

results, less post-operative pain and less associated morbidity, resulting in a reduced recovery period and hospital stay. Overall, these possibilities allow patients to achieve greater functionality and a quicker return to daily activities.

The mitral valve separates the left atrium from the left ventricle, stenosis takes place gradually. Initially the onset is slowly but gradually it gets progressively worse with increasing disability. The main symptoms are dyspnoea (shortness of breath) physical stress and fatigue, gradually limiting the patient's capacity to carry out his daily activities.

Heart valve repair surgery is the repair or replacement of the patient's valve by a prosthesis that may be entirely synthetic or biological. Repair or replacement of the mitral valve is considered the only suitable option for patients with

valve disease or in cases of isolated severe degenerative regurgitation of the mitral valve, repair is possible in approximately 90% of all cases.

It is proven that Minimally Invasive Surgery has important advantages when compared with conventional sternotomy, it is a safe technique, with proven improved clinical and functional results in the immediate postoperative period.

This type of non-invasive surgery causes much less pain to the patient and the recovery period is much shorter. The patient is able to return to his daily activities much sooner (it is possible to drive a motor vehicle after only 2 weeks), these are all aspects which please patients.

In addition to the already mentioned advantages, the fact that the only incision necessary is very small means the patient doesn't



need to remain in Intensive Care for very long. The number of days the ventilated are much less and fewer blood transfusions are neces-

sary. There is also a lower incidence of systemic infections or infections of the wound or post operative renal complications.

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<sup>1)</sup> The Echocardiography Laboratory of the HPA - Gambelas has been awarded the European Accreditation by the European Cardiovascular Imaging Society in 2020.

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