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[PITCH ONE: First to Offer WATCHMAN FLX in your area](#)

- If you are the first to offer the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Device in your area, use this pitch note to reach out to media contacts via email to raise awareness for your institution.

[PITCH TWO: Milestone implant announcement](#)

- Use this email pitch template if your hospital would like to promote a milestone implant number of the WATCHMAN device at your facility.

[PITCH THREE: Disease Awareness Month/Week/Day](#)

- This email template is for hospitals to promote the availability of the WATCHMAN device at their facility in conjunction with national disease awareness months/weeks/days.

Approved For Use Following FDA Approval of WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device

Sample Media Pitch: First to Offer WATCHMAN FLX in your area

SUBJECT LINE: [FACILITY NAME] introduces [CITY/REGION] to device that reduces risk of stroke for patients with heart condition

Dear [INSERT NAME],

[INSERT FACILITY] recently became the first hospital in [INSERT CITY/REGION] to offer patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (AF) an alternative to long-term blood thinners with the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Implant.

[INSERT PHYSICIAN NAME & TITLE] implanted the first WATCHMAN FLX device – the only FDA-approved implant proven to reduce stroke risk in people with AF not caused by a heart valve problem – at [INSERT FACILITY].

The WATCHMAN technology, which has been implanted in more than 100,000 patients worldwide, closes off an area of the heart called the left atrial appendage (LAA) to keep harmful blood clots that can form in the LAA from entering the blood stream and potentially causing a stroke. By closing off the LAA, the risk of stroke may be reduced and, over time, patients may be able to stop taking blood thinners. The newest version of the implant has an updated design to help treat more patients safely and effectively to ensure the best long-term outcomes.

[INSERT PATIENT NAME, IF YOU HAVE PATIENT CONSENT], who received the WATCHMAN FLX Implant at [INSERT FACILITY], is one of an estimated six million Americans who are affected by AF - an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart.¹ [INSERT MORE DETAILS OF PATIENT STORY IF AVAILABLE/OF INTEREST, IF YOU HAVE PATIENT CONSENT; PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR LEGAL COUNSEL TO ENSURE PROPER CONSENT FORM].

[IF YOU WROTE A PRESS RELEASE TO ANNOUNCE THE FIRST IMPLANT, ALSO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING] A press release with more information is included below. Please let me know of any questions and I can facilitate an interview with Dr. [NAME] or [PATIENT NAME].

Best,

[INSERT NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION]

[INSERT FULL TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE]

Sample Media Pitch: Milestone implant announcement

SUBJECT LINE: Local [Woman/Man] Undergoes Hospital's [MILESTONE #] implant of heart device that reduces the risk of stroke

Dear [INSERT NAME],

This [INSERT TIMING], a patient was implanted with the [MILESTONE #] WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Implant at the [INSERT FACILITY]. The only FDA-approved implant proven to reduce stroke risk in people with atrial fibrillation (AF) not caused by a heart valve problem, this device is built upon the WATCHMAN technology, which is the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world and has been used to treat more than 100,000 patients.

Up to six million Americans are affected by AF – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart.ⁱ People with AF may be at greater risk for stroke than those with normal heart rhythms. The WATCHMAN FLX implant closes off an area of the heart called the left atrial appendage (LAA) to keep harmful blood clots that can form in the LAA from entering the blood stream and potentially causing a stroke. By closing off the LAA, the risk of stroke may be reduced and, over time, patients may be able to stop taking blood thinners.

[INSERT PHYSICIAN NAME & TITLE] implanted the first WATCHMAN FLX device in [INSERT PATIENT NAME IF YOU HAVE PATIENT CONSENT/USED PREVIOUSLY IN MEDIA OUTREACH] at [INSERT FACILITY] in [INSERT TIMING]. Today, [INSERT DETAILS OF CURRENT STATUS OF FIRST PATIENT IF AVAILABLE/OF INTEREST, IF YOU HAVE PATIENT CONSENT; PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR LEGAL COUNSEL TO ENSURE PROPER CONSENT FORM].

[IF YOU WROTE A PRESS RELEASE TO ANNOUNCE THE IMPLANT MILESTONE, ALSO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING] A press release with more information is included below. Please let me know of any questions and I can facilitate an interview with Dr. [NAME] or [PATIENT NAME].

Best,

[INSERT NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION]

[INSERT FULL TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE]

Sample Media Pitch: Disease Awareness Month/Week/Day

SUBJECT LINE: [FACILITY NAME] raises awareness for [CALENDAR MILESTONE]

Dear [INSERT NAME],

INSERT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO LEAD OPTIONS

OPTION ONE

Did you know in the U.S. someone has a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies from a stroke every four minutes?^{ii,iii}

Shockingly, 80 percent of strokes are preventable,^{iv} and further education could save thousands of lives every year.

OPTION TWO

Most people don't realize that they may have atrial fibrillation (AF) without obvious, or sometimes any, symptoms. However, AF is the most common cardiac arrhythmia, currently affecting up to six million Americans.^v

Stroke is the most common complication of AF, and AF-related strokes are also more frequently fatal and disabling.^{vi,vii}

BODY COPY TO INCLUDE WITH EITHER LEAD

Ahead of [CALENDAR MILESTONE] on [INSERT DATE/MONTH], [INSERT FACILITY NAME] is raising awareness in [INSERT CITY/REGION] to help educate patients about [INSERT DISEASE STATE], as well as the treatment options available for those with the condition.

[Dr. X] of [INSERT INSTITUTION] is available to discuss:

- How to recognize the signs of [INSERT DISEASE STATE];
- What action to take if you suspect you're having a [HEART EVENT or STROKE]; and
- Discuss the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Implant, the only FDA-approved device proven to reduce stroke risk in people with atrial fibrillation (AF) not caused by a heart valve problem.

Please let me know your availability and I'd be happy to coordinate an interview. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
[NAME]

ⁱ Benjamin EJ, Muntner P, Alonso A, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2019 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2019;137:e1-e473.

ⁱⁱ American Stroke Association. <https://www.stroke.org/en/about-the-american-stroke-association/american-stroke-month/community-resources-english/strokes-and-brain-health>. Accessed May 14, 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/facts.htm>. Accessed May 14, 2020.

^{iv} Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases 2010. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2011.

^v Benjamin EJ, Muntner P, Alonso A, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2019 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2019;137:e1-e473.

^{vi} Hart RG, Halperin JL., *Ann Intern Med*. 1999; 131:688–695

^{vii} McGrath ER, *Neurology* 2013; 81:825-832

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[TEMPLATE SOCIAL POSTS: First to Offer WATCHMAN FLX in your area](#)

- Use this set of templated social posts to raise awareness for your institution if you are one of the first to offer the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Device in your area.

[TEMPLATE SOCIAL POSTS: Milestone implant announcement](#)

- These templated social posts should be used if your hospital would like to promote a milestone implant number of the WATCHMAN FLX device at your facility.

[TEMPLATE SOCIAL POSTS: Disease Awareness Month/Week/Day](#)

- Use this set of template social posts if you'd like to promote the availability of the WATCHMAN FLX device at your facility in conjunction with a national/international disease awareness month/week/day.

[TEMPLATE SOCIAL POSTS: Device Awareness and Education](#)

- Use these social media posts to educate your audience about the WATCHMAN FLX device and procedure. These posts can be used at any time throughout the year.

Template Social Posts: First to Offer WATCHMAN FLX in your area

Below are ideas for Tweets and Facebook posts that you can use to announce the first implant at your facility. Keep in mind:

- For added engagement, consider including a photo and a website link. Examples include a photo of the physician who performed the first implant or a photo of the patient, infographics, videos, etc. *[Make sure to obtain appropriate permissions to publish the images.]*
- You can create a shortened web link – also known as a bit.ly – by copying and pasting the web address of your desired page destination into <https://bitly.com/>. It will produce a shorter web link that you’re able to track.
- If you have a WATCHMAN FLX or LAAC webpage on your website, consider including a link to that page within all your social posts on the topic. You can also link to third-party, heart health/AFib websites or www.watchman.com to direct people to learn more.
- We recommend using the below tweets in sequence to engage the audience and tell the WATCHMAN FLX story.

Sample Tweets (and suggested sequencing)

Proud to offer the next-gen WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device – the only FDA-approved implant proven to reduce stroke risk in people w/AFib not caused by a heart valve problem, which is built on the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world. [bit.ly link to facility press release if issued]
~6M Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation or AFib – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Learn more about AFib https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C and contact us for treatment options now available
#DYK: Patients with AFib (irregular heartbeat) are 5x more likely to have a stroke; AFib-related strokes are more frequently fatal and disabling. Learn more https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C
Dr. [name] implanted our 1st WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device for the reduction of stroke risk associated with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. [bit.ly link to facility press release if issued]
IF YOU ARE FIRST IN REGION TO IMPLANT: We’re first in [city/region/state] with the newest alternative to long-term blood thinning medications to reduce this risk of stroke in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. Learn more about the device https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C

Sample Facebook Posts

[Facility] is one of the first hospitals in [city/region/state] to implant the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. Learn more: [link to facility press release if issued]
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An estimated six million Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation (AFib) – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Patients with AFib have a five-fold increased risk of stroke due to blood clots that can form in an area of heart called the left atrial appendage and travel to the brain. [Facility] is the first hospital in [city/region/state] to offer the newest stroke risk reduction device for patients with non-valvular AF seeking an alternative to long-term blood thinning medications, designed to help treat more patients safely and effectively to ensure the best long-term outcomes. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Dr. [name] implanted our 1st WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant for treatment of non-valvular atrial fibrillation. [bit.ly link to facility press release if issued] To learn more about this next-generation treatment alternative, visit <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Did you know in the U.S. someone has a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies from a stroke every four minutes?

Shockingly, 80 percent of strokes are preventable, and further education could save thousands of lives every year. We are proud to be one of the first in our [city/region/state] to offer our patients the latest option for stroke risk reduction – the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant – the only FDA-approved device alternative to long-term blood thinning medication proven to reduce stroke risk in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Template Social Posts: Milestone implant announcement

Below are ideas for Tweets and Facebook messages that you can use to promote the WATCHMAN FLX device at your facility in conjunction with an implant milestone for your institution. Keep in mind:

- For added engagement with your followers, could include a photo of the physician who performed the milestone implant or a photo of a patient you are profiling with any of the messages. *[Make sure to obtain appropriate permissions to publish the images.]*
- You can create a shortened web link – also known as a bit.ly – by copying and pasting the web address of your desired page destination into <https://bitly.com/>. It will produce a shorter web link that you're able to track.
- If you have a WATCHMAN FLX or LAAC webpage on your website, consider including a link to that page within all your social posts on the topic. You can also link to third-party, heart health/AFib websites or www.watchman.com to direct people to learn more.

Sample Tweets

This [INSERT TIMING], a patient was implanted with the [MILESTONE #] WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device at our hospital. Proud to offer this next-generation therapy to our patients with non-valvular #AFib! Learn more <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

~6M Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation or AFib – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Learn more about treatment options now available <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

We've implanted [MILESTONE #] #WATCHMANFLX devices in patients with non-valvular AF at our hospital. Learn more about this one-time alternative to long-term blood thinners, built upon the most studied and implanted LAAC device worldwide. <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

We're proud of our partnership w/ @bostonsci to offer our patients with non-valvular AFib the #WATCHMANFLX Implant to reduce their risk of stroke! Learn more <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Sample Facebook Posts

This [INSERT TIMING], a patient was implanted with the [MILESTONE #] WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant at our hospital. The device is the only FDA-approved implant proven to reduce stroke risk in people with atrial fibrillation not caused by a heart valve problem. This technology is built upon the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world, which has been used to treat more than 100,000 patients worldwide. Learn more <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

An estimated six million Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation (AFib) – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Patients with AFib have a five-fold increased risk of stroke due to blood clots that can form in an area of heart called the left atrial appendage and travel to the brain.

This [INSERT TIMING], a patient was implanted with the [MILESTONE #] WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant at our hospital. The next-generation WATCHMAN FLX implant is a stroke risk reduction option for patients with non-valvular AFib seeking an alternative to long-term blood thinning medications and is built upon the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Did you know in the U.S. someone has a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies from a stroke every four minutes?

Shocking, 80 percent of strokes are preventable, and further education could save thousands of lives every year. We are proud to offer our patients an option for stroke risk reduction – the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant – an FDA-approved alternative to long-term blood thinning medications for stroke risk reduction in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. This next-generation device is built the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world and has a new design to help treat more patients safely and effectively to ensure the best long-term outcomes. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C>

Template Social Posts: Disease Awareness Month/Week/Day

Below are ideas for Tweets and Facebook messages that you can use to promote the WATCHMAN FLX device at your facility in conjunction with national awareness months/weeks. Keep in mind:

- For added engagement with your followers, you can include a hashtag related to the awareness month you are referencing on Twitter and Facebook (i.e., #heartmonth for National Heart Health Month in February).
- Consider including a photo and a website link. Examples include a photo of the physician who performed the first implant or a photo of the patient, infographics, videos, etc. *[Make sure to obtain appropriate permissions to publish the images.]*
- You can create a shortened web link – also known as a bit.ly – by copying and pasting the web address of your desired page destination into <https://bitly.com/>. It will produce a shorter web link that you’re able to track.
- If you have a WATCHMAN FLX or LAAC webpage on your website, consider including a link to that page within all your social posts on the topic. You can also link to third-party, heart health/AFib websites or www.watchman.com to direct people to learn more.

Sample Tweets

Did you know in the U.S. someone has a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies from a stroke every four minutes? #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
~6M Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation of AFib – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
Ahead of [awareness month/week/day], [facility name] is helping educate patients about [insert disease state] and treatment options now available. #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
The #WATCHMANFLX Implant highlights our commitment to bringing meaningful innovations to patients with non-valvular #AFib #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
We now offer patients with non-valvular AFib an alternative to long-term blood thinning medications with the next-generation #WATCHMANFLX Implant #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
We’re proud of our partnership w/ @bostonsci to offer the #WATCHMANFLX Implant #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]

Sample Facebook Posts

This [awareness month/week/day] we want you to know that [facility] is one of the first hospitals in [city/region/state] to implant the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. Learn more about this treatment option https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C . #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]
An estimated six million Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation (AFib) – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Patients with AFib have a five-fold increased risk of stroke due to blood clots that can form in an area of heart called the left atrial appendage and travel to the brain. [Facility] is the first hospital in [city/region/state] to offer the newest stroke risk reduction option for

high-risk patients with non-valvular AFib seeking an alternative to long-term blood thinning medications. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C> #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]

Did you know that in the U.S. someone has a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies from a stroke every four minutes?

Shockingly, 80 percent of strokes are preventable, and further education could save thousands of lives every year. We are proud to offer our patients a new option for stroke risk reduction – the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant – an alternative to long-term blood thinning medications and the only FDA-approved implant proven to reduce stroke risk in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. This next-generation device is built on the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world and has a new design to help treat more patients safely and effectively to ensure the best long-term outcomes. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C> #[insert awareness month appropriate hashtag]

Template Social Posts: General Device Awareness and Education

Below are ideas for Tweets and Facebook posts that you can use to educate your audience about the WATCHMAN FLX device and procedure. Keep in mind:

- For added engagement, consider including a photo and a website link. Examples include a photo of the physician who performed the first implant or a photo of the patient, infographics, videos, etc. *[Make sure to obtain appropriate permissions to publish the images.]*
- You can create a shortened web link – also known as a bit.ly – by copying and pasting the web address of your desired page destination into <https://bitly.com/>. It will produce a shorter web link that you’re able to track.
- If you have a WATCHMAN FLX or LAAC webpage on your website, consider including a link to that page within all social posts on the topic. You can also link to third-party, heart health/AFib websites or www.watchman.com to direct people to learn more.

Sample Tweets

If you have trouble tolerating long-term use of blood thinners for non-valvular atrial fibrillation, the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure might be an option for you. [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]
There’s an alternative to warfarin for non-valvular AFib patients. A one-time WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant might be an option for you. Learn more about the device & procedure: [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]
Some people need an alternative to blood thinners for non-valvular atrial fibrillation. The WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Implant could be an option. [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]
Do you or a loved one need an alternative to blood thinners for non-valvular atrial fibrillation? Learn about the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure device. Your physician at (hospital name) can discuss more. [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]
Blood thinners may not be the only option for AFib stroke risk. Learn about a new left atrial appendage closure implant could be an option for you. [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]
The WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure device is built upon the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world! Learn more about the device for patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation: [link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C]

Sample Facebook Posts

If you or a loved one need an alternative to blood thinners for non-valvular atrial fibrillation, a one-time procedure to implant the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) device may reduce stroke risk for a lifetime. Learn about the implant and discuss with your cardiologist. [[link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C](#)]

Did you know, in people with AFib not caused by a heart valve problem, more than 90% of stroke-causing clots that come from the heart are formed in the Left Atrial Appendage (LAA). A next-generation implant called the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Device is designed to permanently close the LAA, thus reducing the risk of stroke. Learn more about the device and procedure: [[link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C](#)]

An estimated six million Americans are affected by atrial fibrillation (AFib) – an irregular heartbeat that feels like a quivering heart. Patients with AFib have a five-fold increased risk of stroke due to blood clots that can form in an area of heart called the left atrial appendage and travel to the brain. A one-time procedure with the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Implant can help reduce the risk of stroke for many patients. Learn more about the device and procedure: [[link to your hospital webpage with information about WATCHMAN FLX/LAAC, or https://bit.ly/2GO3i7C](#)]

###

Media Outreach 101: Getting Started

There are several steps you can take to help increase awareness of the treatment of non-valvular atrial fibrillation and use of the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device at your facility. Below are some tips for contacting reporters who may be interested in writing about the hospital, patients and treatment options.

When to Reach Out to Reporters

- When your practice has news such as a new procedure or product you offer to patients
 - Reporters are often most interested in a story when you can put them in contact with local patients who can make the story come alive by providing interesting or unique perspectives. (*Please consult with your privacy team about obtaining patient consent before sharing the patient's name with a reporter.*)
- To build upon or piggy-back on national news or other trends receiving media coverage, such as the trend of transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) as a minimally invasive option for those with severe aortic stenosis.
 - If a story is popular in the national news, local reporters are often looking to cover how the news affects people in the local area.

How to Identify the Right Reporters

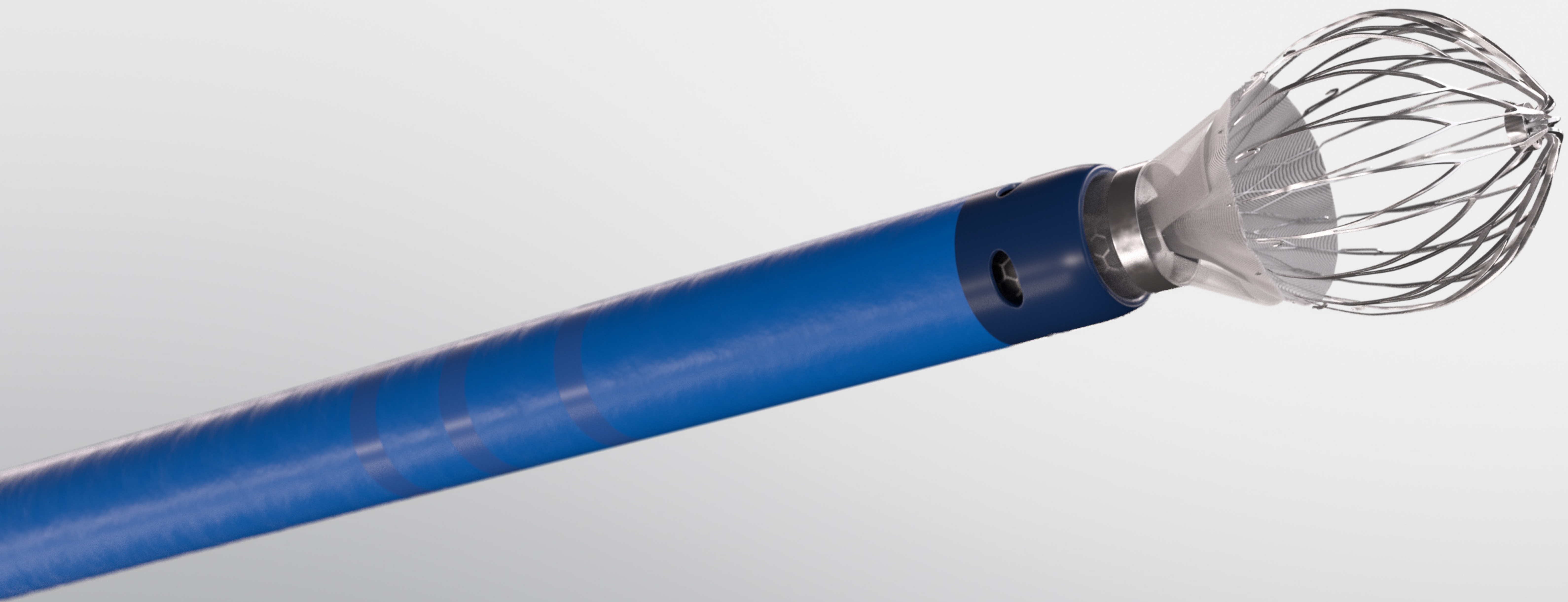
- Target a list of media contacts at your local print and online newspapers, TV and radio stations and update it periodically.
 - Include such information as the reporter's beat (i.e., topics he/she typically covers). Medical, health and science editors/reporters and feature editors/reporters are typically most interested in healthcare stories.
 - If you cannot reach the editor or reporter, call the general number and ask for the assignment editor who will direct you to the best contact for the story angle.
- The best way to identify local reporters is to follow the news. Watch local TV, listen to the radio and read the local newspaper to identify the reporters who cover the kind of medical stories most relevant to your practice and your patients.
- Do online research. Nearly all newspapers, television and radio stations have a website with general contact information.
- Twitter can also be a great resource. Many journalists will either have an e-mail listed or a link to a website where their contact information can be found.

Tools You Can Use to Contact Reporters

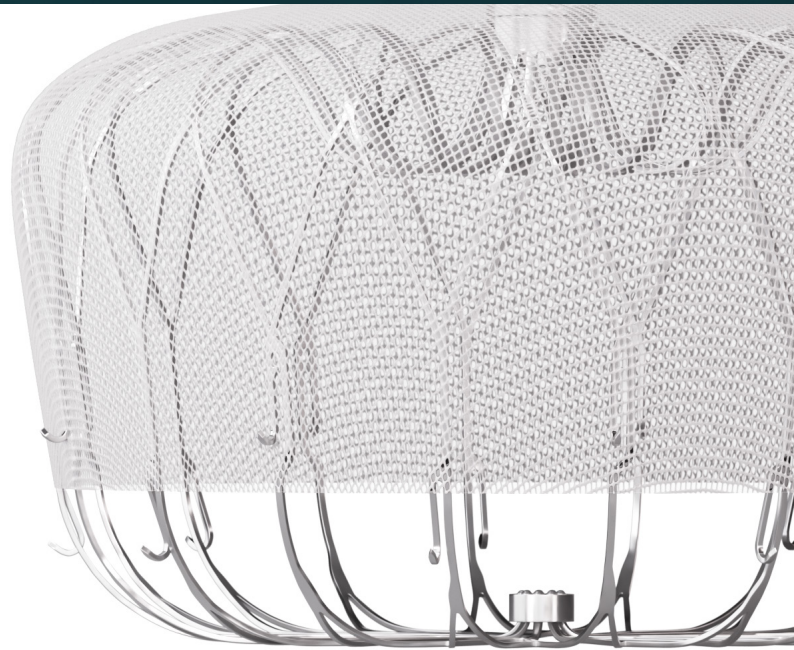
- Press Release
 - Press releases can be sent to local media contacts or distributed via a news service, also known as a wire, to a wider list of reporters who review them to obtain story ideas.
 - To reach a specific reporter directly, the best way to distribute a press release is via email so you can reach the reporter as quickly as possible.
- Pitch Email
 - A pitch email is targeted to a specific media contact and offers news or a story idea tailored to the reporter's interests, media outlet and its audience.

Additional Tips

- Call the reporter within a day of sending the press release or pitch email to gauge their interest level.
- If you email information to a reporter, don't send an attachment unless the reporter has requested it.
- Be persistent, but polite. If a reporter declines your story, ask them if it's okay for you to stay in touch in case anything changes.
- Consider timing media outreach until after first patient is discharged, to ensure positive clinical outcomes.



THE WATCHMAN FLX™ LEFT ATRIAL APPENDAGE CLOSURE DEVICE



What is the WATCHMAN FLX Device?

The **WATCHMAN FLX Left Atrial Appendage (LAAC) Device** serves as a one-time alternative to blood thinners for stroke risk reduction in people with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (AF). Built on the WATCHMAN technology – the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world – the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX device was designed to **advance procedural performance and safety** while **expanding the treatable patient population**.

How the WATCHMAN FLX Device Works

AF affects the heart's ability to pump blood normally, which can cause blood to pool in the heart's left atrial appendage (LAA). There, blood cells can form a clot, and when a blood clot escapes and travels to another part of the body, it can cut off the blood supply to the brain – causing a stroke.^{1,2} In people with non-valvular AF, more than **90%** of stroke-causing clots that come from the heart are formed in the LAA¹, so closing off this part of the heart is an effective way to reduce stroke risk.

Implanted via a minimally invasive procedure, the WATCHMAN FLX device is designed to permanently close off the LAA, while allowing many patients to

discontinue blood thinners and avoid the bleeding and lifestyle challenges associated with them. Key benefits of the new device include:

- **Advanced Safety:** New frame allows for optimal device engagement with the tissue for long-term stability and a faster, complete seal of the LAA
- **Enhanced Procedural Performance:** Fully rounded design offers physicians the ability to safely enter, and maneuver within, the LAA and to fully recapture, reposition and redeploy the device during the procedure
- **Expanded Treatable Patient Population:** Broader size range allows treatment of widest range of patient anatomies

Demonstrated Safety and Closure Efficacy

The pivotal clinical trial³ evaluating the procedural safety and closure efficacy of the WATCHMAN FLX device met its primary safety and efficacy endpoints with a low major complication rate and high rate of effective LAA

Primary Safety Endpoint -
0.5%
event rate

Primary Efficacy Endpoint -
100%
effective LAA closure

96.2%
of patients able to
discontinue blood thinner
at **45-day follow-up**

98.8%
**patients successfully
implanted**

No hemorrhagic strokes
through **12 months**
of follow-up

For more information on the WATCHMAN FLX device,
visit watchman.com/implanter.

¹ Price MJ, Reddy VY, Valderrábano M, et al. Bleeding outcomes after left atrial appendage closure compared with long-term warfarin. JACC Cardiovasc Interv. 2015;8(15):1925-1932.

² Blackshear JL, Odell JA. Appendage obliteration to reduce stroke in cardiac surgical patients with atrial fibrillation. Ann Thorac Surg. 1996;61:755-759.

³ Doshi S. Primary Outcome Evaluation of a Next Generation LAAC Device: The PINNACLE FLX Trial. Presented at HRS 2020 Science.

* LAA closure at 12 months is defined as any peri-device flow with jet size \leq 5mm per core laboratory-assessed TEE

** Defined as occurrence of a major procedure-related complication within 7 days following the procedure or time of hospital discharge, whichever was later

Illustrations for information purposes—not indicative of actual size or clinical outcome.

All photographs taken by Boston Scientific.

Boston Scientific Receives FDA Approval for Next-Generation WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device

*New stroke risk reduction technology designed to advance procedural performance and safety,
treat wider range of patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation*

MARLBOROUGH, Mass., July 21, 2020 – Boston Scientific Corporation (NYSE: BSX) announced it has received U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) Device.

Experience the interactive Multichannel News Release here:

<https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8707351-boston-scientific-watchman-flx-device-fda-approved/>.

The next-generation WATCHMAN FLX device is indicated to reduce the risk of stroke in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (NVAF) who need an alternative to oral anticoagulation therapy by permanently closing off the left atrial appendage – the area of the heart where stroke-causing blood clots commonly form in NVAF. This technology, which is built upon the most studied and implanted LAAC device in the world, features a new, fully rounded design that offers physicians the ability to safely enter, and maneuver within, the left atrial appendage. It is the first LAAC device that can be fully recaptured, repositioned and redeployed for precise placement, and the new frame design allows for optimal device engagement with the tissue for long-term stability and a faster, more complete seal. The WATCHMAN FLX device is available in broader size options than the previous generation device and can treat a wider range of patient anatomies.

“We’ve been very pleased with the real-world clinical outcomes and positive physician feedback for the WATCHMAN FLX device in Europe and are excited to extend availability of this next-generation technology to patients and clinicians throughout the U.S.,” said Joe Fitzgerald, president, Interventional Cardiology, Boston Scientific. “Our WATCHMAN technology was the first FDA-approved LAAC device on the market and has been implanted in more than 100,000 patients worldwide, and now with the WATCHMAN FLX device, we are taking the clinical benefits of the technology to the next level for more patients while further differentiating our structural heart portfolio in the U.S.”

[Positive 12-month results](#) from the pivotal PINNACLE FLX study, which evaluated the performance of the WATCHMAN FLX device as an alternative to long-term non-vitamin K antagonist oral anticoagulants (NOACs) and other OAC medications, were recently presented as a late-breaking clinical trial at Heart Rhythm Society 2020 Science. The study met its primary safety and efficacy endpoints with data demonstrating a low rate of major procedure-related safety events (0.5% at 7 days post procedure) and high rate of effective LAAC (100% with peri-device flow \leq 5mm at 12 months post procedure). Data also demonstrated a high implant success rate of 98.8%.

“Built upon the success of the WATCHMAN platform and thousands of patient-years of clinical research, the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX device is designed to offer increased ease of use for physicians and improved procedural outcomes for patients, including reduced complication risk and healing time,” said Dr. Ian Meredith, AM, global chief medical officer, Boston Scientific. “We’ve set the bar high and look forward to bringing these benefits to a wider range of U.S. patients with NVAF who need an alternative to the bleeding risk and lifestyle challenges associated with long-term use of blood thinners.”

Additional clinical research using the WATCHMAN FLX device for patients with NVAF will continue via enrollment in the OPTION trial – comparing the device to oral anticoagulants in patients who also undergo a cardiac ablation procedure – as well as in the CHAMPION-AF trial, which will study a broader OAC-eligible patient population in a head-to-head fashion to compare the device against NOACs.

The company announced CE Mark for the next-generation WATCHMAN FLX device in March 2019 and will immediately commence a limited launch of the device in the U.S.

For more information on the WATCHMAN FLX device, visit www.watchman.com/implanter.

About Boston Scientific

Boston Scientific transforms lives through innovative medical solutions that improve the health of patients around the world. As a global medical technology leader for 40 years, we advance science for life by providing a broad range of high performance solutions that address unmet patient needs and reduce the cost of healthcare. For more information, visit www.bostonscientific.com and connect on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Forward-looking statements may be identified by words like “anticipate,” “expect,” “project,” “believe,” “plan,” “estimate,” “intend” and similar words. These forward-looking statements are based on our beliefs, assumptions and estimates using information available to us at the time and are not intended to be guarantees of future events or performance. These forward-looking statements include, among other things, statements regarding our business plans and product performance and impact. If our underlying assumptions turn out to be incorrect, or if certain risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results could vary materially from the expectations and projections expressed or implied by our forward-looking statements. These factors, in some cases, have affected and in the future (together with other factors) could affect our ability to implement our business strategy and may cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated by the statements expressed in this press release. As a result, readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on any of our forward-looking statements.

Factors that may cause such differences include, among other things: future economic, competitive, reimbursement and regulatory conditions; new product introductions; demographic trends; intellectual property; litigation; financial market conditions; and future business decisions made by us and our competitors. All of these factors are difficult or impossible to predict accurately and many of them are beyond our control. For a further list and description of these and other important risks and uncertainties that may affect our future operations, see Part I, Item 1A – *Risk Factors* in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, which we may update in Part II, Item 1A – *Risk Factors* in Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q we have filed or will file hereafter. We disclaim any intention or obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect any change in our expectations or in events, conditions or circumstances on which those expectations may be based, or that may affect the likelihood that actual results will differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements. This cautionary statement is applicable to all forward-looking statements contained in this document.

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WATCHMANFLX™ : *One Time. For a Lifetime.*

Non-valvular AFib patients generally aren't aware of an alternate treatment option to reduce their stroke risk and bleeding risk, which is a top concern for those on blood thinners. We also know that patients who are interested in WATCHMAN, once they learn of it, wonder whether it's right for them. Not surprisingly, the prospect of getting off blood thinners is the most motivating factor behind their intention to talk to their doctors about WATCHMAN.

WATCHMAN sets itself apart from blood thinners by providing the only FDA approved implant alternative of its kind for people who need one. Boston Scientific is dedicated to lasting design innovation to continue to define LAAC therapy and to treat more patients with WATCHMAN FLX.

WATCHMAN is a minimally invasive, one-time procedure that reduces stroke risk without the worry that comes with lifelong blood thinners

WATCHMAN is Safe

More than 100,000 WATCHMAN procedures have been performed worldwide. With almost 20 years of clinical trial and real world experience - including 10 clinical trials - WATCHMAN has a proven safety record.

WATCHMAN is Effective

In a clinical trial, 96% of people were able to stop taking blood thinners 45 days after getting WATCHMAN FLX.

Reference: PINNACLE FLX 12-month primary safety and efficacy endpoint results, presented at HRS 2020 Science.

WATCHMAN is proven

WATCHMAN and WATCHMAN FLX are permanent implants designed to reduce the risk of stroke. The only FDA approved implant of its kind, WATCHMAN can help more patients than ever before leave blood thinners behind.

Patient Supporting Messaging

ATRIAL FIBRILLATION & STROKE RISK



- A person with AFib is 5 times more likely to suffer a stroke than someone with a regular heartbeat.

Reference: National Stroke Association. Making the Afib-Stroke Connection. <https://www.stroke.org/sites/default/files/resources/Afib-Connection%20for%20hcp.pdf>. Published 2012. Accessed September 1, 2016

- In people with AFib not caused by a heart valve problem, more than 90% of stroke-causing clots that come from the heart form in a small space in the upper left chamber (left atrial appendage).

Reference: Blackshear JL, Odell JA. Appendage obliteration to reduce stroke in cardiac surgical patients with atrial fibrillation. *Ann Thorac Surg*. 1996;61:755-759.



- WATCHMAN is a small implant that creates a permanent barrier in the left atrial appendage to keep blood clots from escaping and causing a stroke.
- 40% of people eligible for oral anticoagulants do not take their medication for various reasons and may need a treatment alternative.

Reference: Shah et al. Use of Novel Oral Anticoagulants for Patients with Non-valvular Atrial Fibrillation: Results from the NCDR Pinnacle Registry. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. 2014;63.



- More than a third (38%) of those taking oral anticoagulants feel trapped between their fear of having a stroke and their fear of the risks associated with oral anticoagulants.

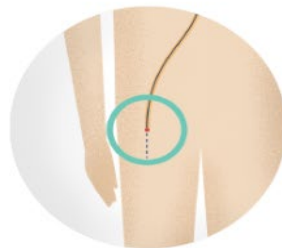
Reference: WatchUsNow.com. The Harris Poll online survey. Boston Scientific. SH-574213-AA. <https://www.watchusnow.com/?page=d75be9d4-ba36-456c-a72d-dc3df07892da>. Accessed March 28, 2019.

WATCHMAN IMPLANT PROCEDURE

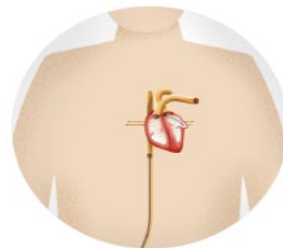


- WATCHMAN is implanted into your heart in a simple, minimally invasive procedure that is typically done under general anesthesia and takes about an hour. Patients commonly stay in the hospital overnight and leave the next day.
- Getting WATCHMAN is not unlike getting a stent: your doctor makes a small cut in your upper leg, inserts a narrow tube, and guides the implant into the left atrial appendage (LAA) of your heart.
- After the procedure you'll be prescribed blood thinning medication by your doctor until your left atrial appendage is completely closed off, usually within 45 days.
- In a clinical trial, 96% of people were able to stop taking blood thinners 45 days after getting WATCHMAN FLX.

Reference: Doshi S. Primary Outcome Evaluation of a Next Generation LAAC Device: The PINNACLE FLX Trial. Presented at HRS 2020 Science.



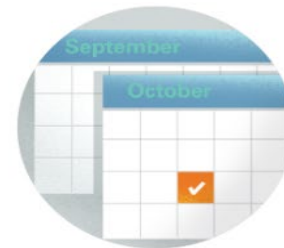
1. Cut in upper leg



2. Guide to heart



3. Stay overnight



4. Blood thinners for 45 days



5. WATCHMAN forms a barrier

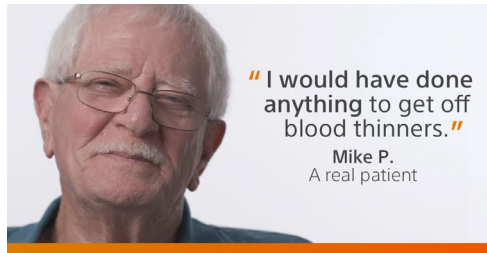
WHO WATCHMAN IS FOR



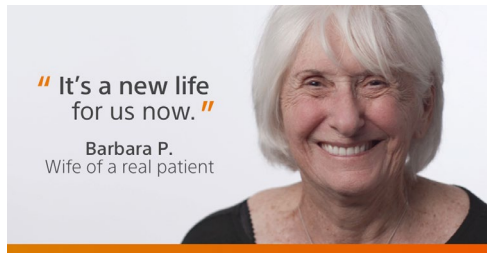
- WATCHMAN and WATCHMAN FLX are the only implants approved by the FDA to safely and effectively reduce the risk of stroke in people with atrial fibrillation not caused by a heart valve problem.
- WATCHMAN can be an important option for people with a history or risk of serious bleeding on blood thinners.



- If you have AFib not caused by a heart valve problem and need an alternative to blood thinners, WATCHMAN may be right for you.
- WATCHMAN is a one-time, permanent implant that never needs to be replaced.
- With the addition of WATCHMAN FLX, WATCHMAN can treat even more patients.



"I would have done anything to get off blood thinners."
Mike P.
A real patient



"It's a new life for us now."
Barbara P.
Wife of a real patient



"For me, the WATCHMAN was a lifesaver."
Cliff D.
A real patient



"WATCHMAN took away my fear of having a stroke due to a blood clot."
Susan B.
A real patient



"Because of WATCHMAN I can cut my own grass at 81 years old."
Liliane W.
A real patient

COST & COVERAGE



- WATCHMAN is covered for eligible Medicare patients who meet certain national coverage criteria. It's also covered by an increasing number of commercial insurers.
- WATCHMAN is different from blood thinners not only in how it works, but in how much it costs. While warfarin must be taken every day for life and represents an ongoing cost, WATCHMAN is a one-time procedure and one-time cost. This means WATCHMAN can save you money over time.
- WATCHMAN has been shown to be less expensive than warfarin two years after implant and half the cost five years after implant.



Reference: Armstrong S, Amorosi SL, Patel P, et al. An Analysis of patient out-of-pocket spending for stroke prevention in non-valvular atrial fibrillation. J Am Coll Cardiol. 2014;63(12_S):A349.

Supporting Clinical Data

CLINICAL DATA

WATCHMAN FLX was studied in the PINNACLE FLX US IDE Clinical Trial. The study was designed to establish the procedural safety and closure efficacy of next generation LAAC device, WATCHMAN FLX.

- Primary Safety Endpoint – low 0.5% adverse event rate.
- Primary Efficacy Endpoint - 100% effective LAA closure at 12 months (LAA closure at 12 months is defined as any peri-device flow with jet size ≤ 5 mm per core laboratory-assessed TEE)
- 96.2% of patients discontinued DOAC at 45-day follow-up
- 98.8% patients were successfully implanted (Implant success defined as successful delivery and release of a WATCHMAN FLX device into the LAA)

Study Design

- 400 patient, 29 US site, single arm, non-randomized trial evaluating WATCHMAN FLX for non-inferiority to safety and efficacy performance goals based on the WATCHMAN™ device.
- Follow-up: 45 days (+TEE), 6 months, 12 months (+TEE), 18 months, and 24 months
- Patient Characteristics: Average CHA2DS2-VASc of 4.2 ± 1.5 , Average HAS-BLED of 2.0 ± 1.0
- Post Implant Drug Regimen: NOAC/ASA for 45 days, Clopidogrel/ASA to 6 months, ASA post 6 months
- **Primary Safety Endpoint:** All-cause death, ischemic stroke, systemic embolism, or device- or procedure-related adverse events requiring surgery or major endovascular intervention within 7 days following the procedure or by hospital discharge, whichever is later.
- **Primary Efficacy Endpoint:** The rate of effective LAA closure defined as any peri-device flow ≤ 5 mm demonstrated by TEE at 12 months
- **Secondary Efficacy Endpoint:** The occurrence of ischemic stroke or systemic embolism at 24 months from the time of enrollment
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria is consistent with WATCHMAN clinical study inclusion/exclusion criteria. Patients must be eligible for short-term NOAC vs warfarin in previous clinical studies.

Reference: Doshi S. Primary Outcome Evaluation of a Next Generation LAAC Device: The PINNACLE FLX Trial. Presented at HRS 2020 Science

Important Safety Information

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

The WATCHMAN and WATCHMAN FLX Devices are permanent implants designed to close the left atrial appendage in the heart in an effort to reduce the risk of stroke.

With all medical procedures there are risks associated with the implant procedure and the use of the device. The risks include but are not limited to accidental heart puncture, air embolism, allergic reaction, anemia, anesthesia risks, arrhythmias, AV (Arteriovenous) fistula, bleeding or throat pain from the TEE (Trans Esophageal Echo) probe, blood clot or air bubbles in the lungs or other organs, bruising at the catheter insertion site, clot formation on the device, cranial bleed, excessive bleeding, gastrointestinal bleeding, groin puncture bleed, hypotension, infection/pneumonia, pneumothorax, pulmonary edema, pulmonary vein obstruction, renal failure, stroke, thrombosis and transient ischemic attack. In rare cases death can occur.

Be sure to talk with your doctor so that you thoroughly understand all of the risks and benefits associated with the implantation of the device.





Media Outreach 102: Preparing for a Media Interview

Media interviews are usually quick, which means there is a short window of time to deliver information. Below you will find helpful ideas to ensure your spokesperson gets your message across when speaking with the media about the WATCHMAN FLX™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device.

Delivering Your Message

Take Control

- Know what you want to accomplish in the interview and take control. Don't wait for the reporter to guide you through your story. Deliver your messages early and often. Use bridges to get back to the points you want to make.

Use Flags

- Phrases such as "What's most important..." and "The key thing is..." and "There are three critical factors..." signal to the audience that you're about to say something important.

Build Bridges

- Building bridges is one of the most important interview techniques. Often a reporter will ask you a question that may not allow you to dive right into your message. Don't just answer his or her question; find a way to go beyond the answer to your message.

Turn negatives into POSITIVES

- If the reporter asks you a negative question, don't be defensive and don't repeat the negative question as part of your response. Address the negative with your perspective – and then bridge to a message. Always end on a positive note.

*Please note – NOTHING is off the record

Ways to Bridge

- **ADDRESS the Immediate Question**
(Without echoing negative language)
 - *"Not at all..."*
 - *"On the contrary..."*
 - *"I wouldn't phrase it that way..."*
 - *"That hasn't been my/our experience..."*
- **BRIDGE to a Key Message**
 - *"...but what I can tell you is..."*
 - *"...the important issue here is..."*
 - *"...the point I want to get across is..."*
 - *"...the most important thing to note is..."*
 - *"...the answer to the question I think you're asking is..."*
- **DELIVER the Key Message**
 - Bridging can also be used to provide additional information
 - *"You're absolutely right to say that, but there's another aspect to this that people may not realize..."*