Botsford cardiologist on cutting edge of pacemakers

By MARY RODRIQUE

Dr. Robert Stomel displays his collection of pacemakers to illustrate how much technology has solved since the first mammade device to control a hear's electric system was invented.

The older bulky model looks a bit like an old-fashioned cigarette case, but the newer models are sieck — less than half the size of a disposable lighter and almost as light as size.

sleek — less taan nast too size or, a disposable lighter and almost as light as air.

But size and weight aren't the only things about pacemakers that are evolviong.

Stomel, chief of cardiology at Bostford General Hospital, recently performed the first US, implant of a pacing system that uses a single guide wire to monitor both the upper and lower-tamber functioning of the heart. "It's significantly less costly and takes half the time of a traditional pacemaker placement," Stomel said. Bostford, in Farmington Hills, implants up to 140 pacemakers a year, making it a major center.

Stomel and performed the proce-

pacermakers a year, making it a major center.

Stomel performed the procedure entire this year on an 83-year-old man with an active social life. He says it was a success.

The so-called Unity C pacing system manufactured by Intermedies Inc. of Angleton, Texas, recently received FDA approval. Earlier trials were performed in Europe and Hong Kong. Stomel was given the opportunity to perform the first procedure in this country because of his primary research on the model.

Elderly pacemaker candidates

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Medical model: The so-called Unity C pacing system is manufactured by Intermedics Inc. of Angleton, Texas, and recently received FDA approval.

generally receive just the single lead model because of cost and case of implant, Stome issid. Us-ing a plastic human heart model, the demonstrated how a dual lead pacemaker is inserted through a win first into the heart's bottom chamber and then a second wire inserted in an upward loop— like the letter J— into the heart's up-

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per chamber. The battery portion is inserted under the skin near the collarbone. "It's difficult. There's twice as much X-ray time needed. The leaf falls out occasionally. It's significantly more expensive," he said. "That's why doctors tend to put single chamber pacemakers into their elderly patients, not realizing it made much difference." At an American College of Cardiology conference in New Orleans last week, research was presented that showed the survival rate for elderly recipients of the dual wire pacemaker after five years was 64 percent as appased to just 44 percent for those with the single chamber system.

For Stomel, this underscores the importance of the new Unity-C.

C.

"The Unity is a single lead with a metal sensor that allows the upper chamber of the heart to be sensed. It senses the strium and paces the ventricle and allows the ease of putting in a single lead," he said.

Stomel is in the preliminary stage with Intermedics of setting up a multi center trial for the new up a multi center trial for the new pacing system.
"It should be applicable for all patients regardless of age," he

sald. "But doctors tend to put in

said. "But doctors tend to put in both leads with younger patients. The lasue scenar to arise with the clderly. This system should provide a nice compromise."

Patients need pacemakers primarily for one of two reasons.

"The patients own pecemaker starts to run wild — either causing the heart to best too fast or too slow, which is called sick sinus syndrome," said Stomel. The other reason is when the electrical system is severed, caused by old age. Anytime the patient has a normal beating uper heart, he can have a Unity pacemaker."

Pacemakers are installed in pa-tients ranging from infants born without the proper circuitry to the elderly, and all ages in between. They last five to 15 years, depend-ing on how often activated, and

replacement can be performed ord an out-patient hasis.

Stome lives in Farmington, Hills with his wife Elaine Martin.

Stomel, his pacemaker nurse as-sistant. He has two children, José, and Mindy who live in Prescott, Ariz.

Pacemaker Dr. Robert 🗦

a plastic human heart , model, as he

lead pacemaker is inserted through a 11 vein first into. the heart's bottom **
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how a dual

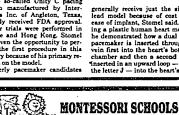
then a secserted in an -upward loop · like the letter J into the heart's upper chamber.

Ariz.

He is president of the Oakland
County Osteopathic Medical Society and national chairman of the cardiovascular disease section of the American College of Osteo pathic Internists. He presents several major car

He presents several major cardiology programs a year in the United States and has been affilt-ated with Batsford for 10 years. "Patients should understand, that having a pacemaker installed is not a traumatic event," he said, "it's a quick procedure with little risk of complication and the power of the program of the present spends two days in the how pital at best."





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