



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **TRANSCATHETER AORTIC VALVE REPLACEMENT CENTER ESTABLISHED AT BOCA REGIONAL**

*Procedure provides treatment option for patients who cannot undergo traditional open-heart valve replacement surgery*

**BOCA RATON, FL – February 17, 2016** – Officials at Boca Raton Regional Hospital today announced the establishment of the Fern F. Steinfeld Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement Center. This latest component of the Hospital's Christine E. Lynn Heart & Vascular Institute (LHVI) now provides a highly therapeutic treatment option for patients with symptomatic aortic stenosis and who are considered a high risk for standard valve replacement surgery.

Aortic valve stenosis is a type of heart disease in which the valve that regulates blood flow from the heart is narrowed and prevented from opening fully. It is estimated that patients with severe aortic stenosis have about a 50 percent chance of living just two years without aortic valve replacement.

Regretfully, many of these patients are of advanced age or have co-existing health issues that disqualify them for traditional valve replacement. Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement or TAVR is a minimally invasive surgical technique that greatly reduces the procedural risk for these individuals.

As opposed to accessing the heart through a large incision in the chest, TAVR delivers the artificial replacement valve through a catheter. Similar to a stent placement in an artery, the catheter is inserted through a small incision in the groin or between the ribs, thus eliminating the need to surgically separate the chest.

During the procedure, the replacement valve collapses to a very small diameter and is attached to a balloon device. The new valve is then positioned inside the natural aortic valve, inflated and pushes the faulty valve aside. The replacement valve begins to function as soon as the balloon deflates to permit the flow of blood.

Patients usually experience immediate benefit in terms of improved blood circulation. Because the valve replacement is done via minimally invasive technique, most patients can expect a much faster recovery period than they would from the conventional open-heart procedure.

The Center is led by Carlos A. Velez, MD, FACC, FSCAI, who serves as Director of Structural Heart Disease Interventions at LHVI. Dr. Velez is a specialist in TAVR and has served on the faculty of some of the nation's most prestigious heart programs including those at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans, Louisiana and the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, Washington.

“Dr. Velez brings impeccable credentials and experience to our TAVR Center,” said Richard Cartledge, MD, FACS and Chief of Cardiac Surgery at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. “We, along with our patients, are most fortunate to have a clinician of his caliber heading this most important addition to our capabilities at the Lynn Heart & Vascular Institute.”

***About Boca Raton Regional Hospital – Advancing the boundaries of medicine.***

Boca Raton Regional Hospital is an advanced, tertiary medical center ([BRRH.com](http://BRRH.com)) with 400 beds and more than 800 primary and specialty physicians on staff. The Hospital is a recognized leader in oncology, cardiovascular disease and surgery, minimally invasive surgery, orthopedics, women's health, emergency medicine and the neurosciences, all of which offer state-of-the-art diagnostic and imaging capabilities. The Hospital is a designated Comprehensive Stroke Center by the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA).

Boca Raton Regional Hospital was the recipient of the 2014 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ for 10 years running and was named one of America's 50 Best Hospitals in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, both by Healthgrades®. Boca Raton Regional Hospital was also recognized in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2015–2016 Best Hospitals listing as a top-ranked hospital in the South Florida metropolitan area for the fourth time in the last five years.