**Media Interview Guide**

Conducting a media interview can be intimidating, but with a little planning you can deliver quality information to media outlets. Review the information below to help you plan for an interview explaining the Hybrid AF™ Therapy and its impact on patients.

**Know Your Key Points**

Create a simple and concise outline of the key points you want to convey in the interview. Take into account who is interviewing you and who their audience is. Why do they care about Hybrid AF Therapy? Interviews often last only a few minutes. Know your message and deliver it quickly and clearly. It can help to practice your points beforehand with a colleague. (See the **Key Points,** p. 2.)

**Give Added Weight to Your Points**

Begin statements with phrases such as “What we’re focused on …” and “The most important factor is ...” to create a strong lead into your key points.

**Bring the Conversation Back**

An interviewer may not ask questions directly related to your key points, but you still need to get to your message with the little time you have. Use this as an opportunity to answer the question in a way that brings you back to one of your key points.

* *Reporter: “My aunt has heart failure. Should she get checked for AF?”*
* *Interviewee: “Even though your aunt may have never felt symptoms of AF, we often see a strong link between heart failure and AF. She should talk to her doctor about it, since we know 1 in 4 people over the age of 40 will develop AF during their lifetime."1*

**Navigate Tough Questions**

* The interviewer is tasked with telling the whole story, not just putting a positive spotlight on your hospital or treatment, and s/he might ask difficult questions of safety and efficacy. Be prepared for these types of questions. In your response, be sure to politely answer the question with your perspective and bring it back to your key messages whenever possible, ending on a positive note.
* Consider everything you say before, during and after an interview to be “on the record.”

**Suggested Talking Points**

**What Is Hybrid AF Therapy?**

* To treat atrial fibrillation (AF, Afib), people may have heard of endocardial catheter ablation, which treats the inside of the heart. For people with advanced stages of AF, catheter ablation alone often does not work well. Hybrid AF Therapy combines endocardial ablation with epicardial ablation, which treats the exterior of the heart. Studies have demonstrated the superiority of Hybrid AF Therapy vs catheter ablation in treating advanced forms of AF
* In this way Hybrid AF Therapy targets **two key trigger** **areas** where atrial fibrillation usually begins: the pulmonary veins inside and the back wall on the outside of the heart.

**Millions of People Need Treatment**

* **Key Point #1:** 1 in 4 adults over age 40 will develop AF in their lifetime1 which causes a **5x** increase in stroke risk.2
* **Key Point #2:** AF affects about 33 million people worldwide3 and 10 million people in Europe4. Up to 50% of those people have non-paroxysmal forms AF called persistent (with AF duration exceeding 7 days) and long-standing persistent (with AF duration exceeding 1 year) AF.4

**This Treatment Is More Effective**

* **Key Point #3:** For people with non-paroxysmal forms of AF, catheter ablation alone often does not work well, even with repeat ablations.5 But Hybrid AF Therapy—which combines ablation on both sides of the heart wall—**can** be a lasting solution to persistent and long-standing persistent AF.6
* **Key Point #4:** In fact compared to catheter ablation alone, these are some of the findings with Hybrid AF Therapy:6,7
  + It is **39% more effective** at stopping AF at 1 year
  + When treating long-standing persistent AF patients, it is **2x more effective** at stopping AF and patients are **more than** **twice** as likely to no longer need AF medications at 18 months. Most people spend **at least 90% less time** in atrial fibrillation at 1 year.
* **Key Point #5:** People in the Hybrid AF Therapy Arm report feeling better, both physically and emotionally.7

*(Data based on the post-hoc analysis of long-standing persistent AF sub-groups (N=65))*

**Who Would Benefit from This Therapy?**

* People who have persistent and long-standing persistent forms of AF. These people have had atrial fibrillation that has lasted for prolonged periods of time without stopping.
* It's important to note that AF progresses from mild to more severe forms. Without effective treatment, a case of mild, or paroxysmal, AF can eventually become persistent and long-standing persistent AF.
* Historically, people with this more severe form of atrial fibrillation had few options to stop their AF. That's why this new Hybrid AF Therapy is so important.

**Treating AF Is Always Very Important Because**

* It's a progressive disease.
* Atrial fibrillation puts a person at **5x** higher risk of stroke2 and **5x** greater risk of heart failure8.
* It is also associated with being less active and a diminished quality of life.9

**What Patients Should Know**

The symptoms for early stage and advanced stage AF are different. Symptoms for advanced AF:9,10

* Shortness of breath
* Lightheadedness
* Fainting
* Weakness
* Lack of energy
* Chest pain or angina

**What Patients Should Do**

* Talk to their doctor to find out what treatment is best for them.
* Once they've had treatment for AF, if symptoms continue, talk once again to their doctor about treatment.
* It's important for each person to find an effective treatment that can stop atrial fibrillation, so that it doesn't progress and become worse.

**EPi-Sense® Guided Coagulation System**

**Indications**: The EPi-Sense® Guided Coagulation System with VisiTrax® is intended for the coagulation of cardiac tissue using radiofrequency (RF) energy during cardiac surgery for the treatment of arrhythmias including Atrial Fibrillation (AFIB) or Atrial Flutter (AFL).

**EPi-Sense ST™ Coagulation Device**

**EU Indications:** The EPi-Sense ST™ Coagulation Device is indicated for the epicardial treatment of arrhythmias including atrial fibrillation (AF) when augmented with an endocardial ablation, with the aim to restore normal sinus rhythm, reduce AF symptoms, and improve quality of life.

**Contraindications**: Patients with presence of left atrial thrombus, a systemic infection, active endocarditis, or another infection local to the surgical site at the time of surgery. Patients with Barrett’s Esophagus.

**Sources**

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