

## Neurological Patient Grateful for Remarkable Recovery

A few years ago, a cerebral angioplasty wasn't a treatment option for a patient suffering from a blocked artery in the brain. Technological advancements have made this a viable procedure to help a growing number of patients avoid the risks and longer recovery periods associated with traditional surgery.

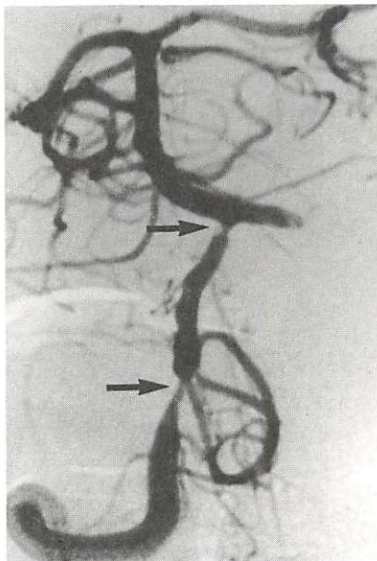
In July, neurosurgeon **Stephen Lownie** and neuroradiologist **David Pelz** used a catheter and balloon to dislodge plaque which had restricted blood flow in two areas of the brain stem (see photograph on the right) of a 63-year-old patient from Listowel. **Mr. Clayton Gaus** had been suffering from a variety of symptoms such as double vision, slurred speech and dizziness.

"We offered Mr. Gaus the standard treatment of prescribing anticoagulants to thin his blood; however, no benefit at all was achieved," Dr. Lownie told the *Insider*. The neurosurgeon further explained that the location of the blockage ruled out traditional surgery because even temporarily halting blood flow in this area could cause brain damage.

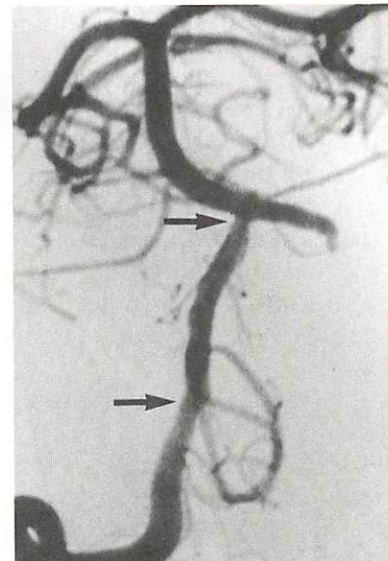
Because Mr. Gaus was believed to be at high risk of suffering a life-threatening stroke, Dr. Lownie was pleased that the patient agreed to undergo an angioplasty. In an interview with the *Insider*, Mr. Gaus commented that he was in hospital for only three days and the procedure itself, performed in the hospital's new Neuro-Angiography suite, took less than three hours. He was most impressed.

Mr. Gaus has been symptom-free since surgery was performed in July. On the day after surgery the retired poultry farmer remarked: "I can't believe the difference in how I feel. I feel like a new man."

Since Dr. Lownie joined UH in July 1992, he has performed cerebral angioplasties on only a small number of patients because, as he explains: "It's unusual to see blockages occur in the brain stem area, and when they do anticoagulants are the usual treatment."



**"Before" Surgery:** The arrows show where the artery in the brain stem has narrowed.



**"After" Surgery:** The arrows point to where the narrowing in the artery used to be.

Mr. Gaus feels he is indeed fortunate to have been at the right place at the right time. "The date of my surgery was postponed because of the installation of the new angiography equipment—that was fortunate for me," he said. Because

University Hospital helped him to resume a normal active lifestyle which includes lots of walking and gardening, Mr. Gaus expressed his thankfulness by generously donating \$500 to the UH Foundation. ■

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