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ST. TAMMANY NEWS



ANGELMED GUARDIAN

My Guardian Angel...24/7

What is a Guardian Angel? A Guardian Angel's 'job' is to protect, watch over, deliver a message, guard and guide....

For people who've had heart problems, a Guardian Angel might be just what they need.

Bill Olexa counts his blessings that his "Guardian" was watching over him last Spring.

Chest pains landed Olexa in the hospital and open heart surgery was performed. A month later he began his walking exercises only to feel more heaviness in his chest. It was discovered that there was a blood clot in one of the bypasses and a stint was required.

Several months later his When Bill Olexa's doctor told him he'd was a candidate qualify for a clinical trial for cardiac patients and recommended he consider participating. He jumped at the opportunity.

"People need to give

back," he says. "I thought it might help somebody else down the line if I participated."

The clinical trial involves a new coronary monitoring system called the AngelMed Guardian System. The device is implanted in the patient's chest and monitors specific heart conditions, 24/7 records the heart's activity continuously. It communicates wirelessly with a pager the patient wears, which vibrates, beeps, or lights up if an irregularity—minor or severe—occurs. It helps people who may not know they are in trouble by alerting them before they have symptoms or are aware that anything is wrong.

It's intended for patients who are susceptible to heart problems but might not feel any symptoms; for those whose symptoms may be delayed; or for those who may not know to get to an emergency room when

they start feeling bad. Also, patients often deny that their symptoms are indicative of a cardiac episode.

"Many times people don't realize they need to get to a doctor. They may not seek medical attention at all," says Dr. Pramod Menon of Cardiovascular Associates in Covington. "We have a saying in cardiology: 'time is muscle.' Damage to the heart muscle is irreversible. This is a great device because it will get people to the cath lab quicker."

The AngelMed surgery takes only about 30 minutes, says Dr. Dale Presser of Cardiovascular Associates. Implanting the AngelMed Device is a minimally invasive procedure similar to inserting a pacemaker. Dr. Dale Presser of Cardiovascular Associates says "The AngelMed implant takes less than 30 minutes. It's an outpatient procedure that

prevents heart damage and provides early detection." He says there have been no complications, and the patient has no limitations post surgery.

Olexa, who had a heart attack last spring and was diagnosed with angina, received his AngelMed a few months after he had a second angiogram to clear a blockage. He's had it for over a year and is happy he joined the trial.

Olexa has had the AngelMed Guardian for over a year and is happy he joined the trial.

"I believe in guardian angels," he says, "so it's like someone is sitting on my chest watching over me."

Cardiovascular Associates is offering this clinical trial FREE to patients who qualify. They have offices in Covington, Hammond, Franklinton, and Lacombe.

Call 871-0735 ext. 145 or visit www.heartwatch.org.

