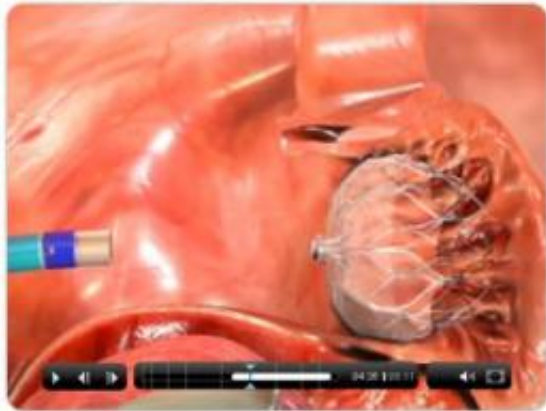


# Stroke-preventing technology demonstrated in JoVE

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The WATCHMAN device is inserted into a small cavity in the heart to prevent clots from traveling to the brain. Credit: © *Journal of Visualized Experiments*

In the United States alone, approximately 6 million people suffer from an irregular heartbeat called atrial fibrillation (AF), and since the incidence increases with age, it is predicted that 15.9 million Americans will be affected by 2050. The most devastating side effect of AF is stroke, but a new device from Boston Scientific may prevent them from occurring.

Researchers from Atritech, now part of Boston Scientific, developed the WATCHMAN device, a small mesh umbrella that can be inserted into part of the heart cavity to prevent the formation of [blood clots](#) that cause strokes.

Currently, the anti-coagulant [drug warfarin](#) is used to prevent strokes, but the drug comes with other risks.

"[Warfarin](#) has a lot of side-effects. One major side-effect is the bleeding risk," said paper author Dr. Sven Mobius-Winkler. "Therefore, only 50 percent of the patients who should take Warfarin actually take it."

The WATCHMAN device gives patients another option. It has already been approved for use in the European Union and Australia, and secured investigational approval from the FDA in 2009.

To help train doctors how to use the device, doctors from the University of Leipzig Heart Center in Germany are publishing the full WATCHMAN placement procedure in the *Journal of Visualized Experiments* (JoVE), the world's first and only peer-reviewed, PubMed indexed, science and medicine video journal.

"Intervention and closure of the left atrial appendage is a complex procedure," said Dr. Mobius- Winkler. "For inexperienced physicians, it is hard to learn this procedure and therefore the video can help by doing step-by-step the implantation."

"The WATCHMAN device will give patients with atrial fibrillation another option rather than anti-coagulant drugs," said JoVE Editor Dr. Robert Dolan. "This article demonstrates the implantation of the device and will help clinicians gain expertise with the procedure, helping many of the patients who are unable or unwilling to take warfarin."

**More information:** The procedure will be published in JoVE on Feb. 28, and can be seen here: [http:// \[www.jove.com/video/3671/the-wa ... r-atrialfibrillation\]\(http://www.jove.com/video/3671/the-wa...r-atrialfibrillation\)](http://www.jove.com/video/3671/the-wa...r-atrialfibrillation)

Provided by The Journal of Visualized Experiments

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