

# Montreal technology uses cold to treat heart condition

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A team of cardiologists from the Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) specializing in cardiac arrhythmias has used for the very first time in Canada, a technology developed in Montreal to treat a patient with atrial fibrillation. Recently licenced by Health Canada, this sophisticated device is a balloon inserted by catheter that uses extreme cold to burn malfunctioning heart tissue. This medical milestone is excellent news for hundreds of Canadians as one in 20 people will suffer from atrial fibrillation at some point in their lives.

On September 4 2012, Doctor Marc Dubuc and Doctor Peter Guerra, both [cardiologists](#) at MHI, performed the procedure in a 67-year-old female patient. The patient had been suffering from arrhythmia for a number of years and drug-based treatments had proved ineffective. The patient tolerated the procedure well and she was able to return to the comfort of her home barely 24 hours after the procedure.

Technology developed in Montreal This innovative technology was developed by Medtronic CryoCath, based in Montreal. The success of this procedure is particularly significant for Dr. Dubuc the principal investigator for the research carried out at Montreal Heart Insitute that resulted in the development of this technology. "This cryoballoon is a major milestone in the treatment of atrial fibrillation, as the duration of the procedure is reduced and it is both effective and safe for patients", Dr Dubuc stated proudly. Furthermore, a North American study has demonstrated that 69.9% of patients treated with this type of device no longer suffered from atrial fibrillation after one year, compared with

7.3% of those taking medication alone.

A type of heart disease that affects one in 20 people In Canada, almost 250,000 people suffer from this form of arrhythmia. Closely associated with an [aging population](#), this type of [arrhythmia](#) is becoming more and more common. The main symptoms are palpitations, blackouts and shortness of breath. The heart beats very quickly in an irregular and unpredictable manner. This weakens the heart and encourages blood clots to form, which can cause strokes and peripheral embolisms.

Provided by Montreal Heart Institute

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