

Complex vascular surgery performed at Rustenberg hospital

After an intricate vascular medical procedure performed at the Netcare Ferncrest Hospital in Rustenburg last week, 68-year-old Johannes Kloppers now has a functioning heart. Kloppers had three aneurisms along his aorta, needing extensive surgery but this was not a safe option, given his weakened condition.



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His vascular surgeon, Dr EP Eloff, performed the complex six-and-a-half hour procedure on the patient's aortic thoracic aneurysm, aortic abdominal aneurysm and a left iliac artery aneurysm.

"The procedure was done remotely, using wire-guided stents inserted via the groin and navigated up blood vessels," explains Dr Eloff. "Unlike traditional open surgery, there is no need for large surgical incisions. Patients therefore tend to recover much sooner and the success rate is higher. After a procedure such as this a patient usually has to spend approximately two weeks recovering in hospital but Kloppers was able to go home after just four days.

"Many people in the North West Province are not aware that they can receive such advanced treatment right here in the province and do not have to travel to major centres such as Johannesburg. Since 2011 we have steadily built an impressive vascular surgery facility at Netcare Ferncrest Hospital and are able to offer the most technologically advanced treatments available."

The two aortic aneurysms were treated with endovascular stent grafts, which is a fabric tube that is reinforced with a metal scaffold. It is steered remotely to the aneurysm by means of a 'wire' or delivery catheter, where it is left in place to reinforce the weakened wall of the aneurysm to prevent it from rupturing.

The left iliac artery aneurysm, on the other hand, was embolised, which means that it was sealed off using tiny coils to prevent blood flow to the aneurysm. Embolisation prevents the blood from flowing past the weakened area and helps to stop the vessel wall from weakening further or bursting.

Netcare Ferncrest Hospital GM, Naveen Jumna, says management is committed to ensuring that high-technology, quality medical treatment is available to all people of Rustenburg and surrounding areas. "Working with highly skilled specialists such as Dr Eloff enables us to make this a reality."

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