

Patients suffering from a variety of traumatic events, including cardiac arrest and stroke, receive state-of-the-art treatment at Sarasota Memorial with an advanced device that lowers the body temperature, allowing damaged tissue to heal. By employing the CoolGard 3000® intravascular cooling system in its critical care units, Sarasota Memorial joins an elite group of hospitals around the world that are adopting this life-saving technology.

The CoolGard 3000® was recently highlighted in media reports about Kevin Everett, a professional football player who suffered a spinal cord injury during a game earlier this season. Physicians had used the system to induce a state of mild hypothermia after Everett was admitted to the hospital, and credited the intravascular cooling device for playing a central role in his improved prognosis. At Sarasota Memorial, induced hypothermia helped a recent victim of a lightning strike recover following cardiac arrest.

Although it is still an experimental treatment in spinal cord injury, CoolGard 3000® has been approved for marketing by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for decreasing body temperature subsequent to stroke and intra-cerebral hemorrhage patients since 2003, as well as before or after cardiac- and neuro- surgeries. Since that time, more than 10,000 patients have been treated with this innovative and important technology.

Induced hypothermia has proven to be safe and effective and, in 2005, the American Heart Association recommended that physicians implement it in patients who suffer from cardiac arrest. Other clinical applications where the CoolGard 3000® has been used include fever control, intracranial pressure management, acute liver failure and heat stroke.

The CoolGard 3000® induces a state of mild hypothermia using an “inside-out” approach. A heat exchange catheter, which is a long, thin, soft tube with small balloons surrounding it, is inserted through a vein at the top of the leg. The surgeon gently guides the catheter over a wire to its resting place below the heart. This catheter is then connected to the CoolGard 3000® system, which sends ice-cold saline solution inside the balloons. The patient’s blood is cooled as it passes by the balloons, which leads to overall cooling of the entire body. Since the saline flows inside the catheter and is re-circulated into the CoolGard 3000®, no fluid is infused into the patient and no blood leaves the body. After a period of therapeutic hypothermia, typically 12-24 hours, the system slowly and gently re-warms the patient back to normal body temperature.

Sarasota Memorial has several cooling catheters — an advanced technology that many hospitals lack — thanks to the generosity of donors from the local community.

The CoolGard 3000® Temperature Management System is manufactured and marketed by Irvine, California-based Alsius Corporation, a medical device company that develops products to precisely control patient temperature for critically ill and surgical patients.