

Radial Refinement

As we gain more and more experience with transradial access in the United States, the technique is growing rapidly in popularity. Increasing familiarity with this approach will have great impact on our field as more operators adopt radial into practice.

Choosing the proper tools for radial percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) is a crucial component of optimal procedures. Tejas Patel, MD; Sanjay Shah, MD; Samir Pancholy, MD; and Tak Kwan, MD, open our feature with an overview of the catheter shape selection process for different techniques and cases.

Ronald P. Caputo, MD, teaches us how to conquer the potential problem areas encountered with a transradial approach to central aortic access. S. Elissa Altin, MD, and Varinder P. Singh, MD, review the management of radial access complications, such as radial artery occlusions, compartment syndrome, and perforation.

Joel Lardizabal, MD, and Mauricio G. Cohen, MD, weigh the pros and cons of right versus left radial artery access, looking at the safety, efficacy, and degree of difficulty of each. What is the staying power of transradial coronary intervention in ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) patients?

Simone Biscaglia, MD, and Marco Valgimigli, MD, provide their perspective on both the current and future status of the technique.

We had the unique opportunity this month to publish a timely discussion on the recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

National Coverage Decision (NCD) memo announcing coverage for transcatheter aortic valve replacement. Wayne Powell, Peter C. Block, MD, and I discuss the NCD, and while the decision is a great accomplishment for our specialty, many details remain to be addressed.

Clopidogrel has spent 15 years as a revolutionary antiplatelet therapy for non-STEMI, STEMI, and

PCI patients. Now that the drug's patent has expired, how will treatment change? Paul A. Gurbel, MD, discusses the answer.

Finally, to wrap up the issue, we have an interview with Sunil V. Rao, MD, who talks about optimal medical therapy for avoiding post-PCI complications and the growing popularity of same-day discharge.

As always, we hope to keep you up to date with both the vast literature and current trends in interventional cardiology. Let us know if there are topics you'd like to see reviewed. ■



Ted E. Feldman, MD, FSCAI
Chief Medical Editor
citeditorial@bmctoday.com