

Stroke Awareness Did you know?

"Your age is a major factor in stroke development," states Dr. Wells-Roth. "The chance of having a stroke doubles for each decade of life after age 55."

"Your family medical history matters," explains Dr. Benitez. "Stroke is more common in men, and the risk is even greater if you have a family history of stroke." If you are a woman, the use of birth control pills and pregnancy can also pose special stroke risks.

"Pay attention to stroke symptoms," advises Dr. Wells-Roth. "Transient ischemic attacks (TIA) are warning strokes that produce stroke-like symptoms but do not cause lasting damage." A person who has one or more TIAs is almost 10 times more likely to have a stroke than someone of the same age and sex who has not. Recognizing and treating TIAs can reduce the risk of a major stroke.

"You can decrease your chances of having a stroke by taking care of your body," affirms Dr. Benitez. "For example, high blood pressure is the most important controllable risk factor for stroke, which can easily be tracked on your own." Dr. Wells-Roth adds, "Don't forget about high cholesterol. High cholesterol can lead to a build-up in the arteries which can make it more difficult for blood to flow through; this will also increase your risk for both stroke and heart disease."

"Smoking nearly doubles your risk of a stroke. And, about 11% of all stroke deaths are smoking related, making it important to quit if you are a smoker," says Dr. Benitez. "After quitting for five years, your risk of stroke due to cigarette smoking is about that of a non-smoker. The nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke damages the cardiovascular system in many ways. Smoking also creates a higher risk for peripheral arterial disease and aortic aneurysms."

"Monitoring your diet can lead to a healthier lifestyle," says Dr. Wells-Roth. "Diets high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol levels. Being inactive and/or overweight can also increase your risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and stroke."

"Heart disease is common among stroke victims," explains Dr. Benitez. "People with coronary heart disease or heart failure have a higher risk of stroke than those with hearts that work normally. Dilated cardiomyopathy (an enlarged heart), heart valve disease and some types of congenital heart defects also raise the risk of stroke."

"About 10% of children with sickle cell disease, a genetic disorder that mainly affects African-American and Hispanic children, have a stroke," states Dr. Wells-Roth. "Sickled red blood cells are less able to carry oxygen to the body's tissue and organs. These cells also tend to stick to blood vessel walls which can block arteries to the brain and cause a stroke."

3 WAYS TO TEST FOR A STROKE

Can you raise your arms and keep them up?

Can you smile?

Can you repeat a simple sentence?

IF THE ANSWER IS NO, CALL YOUR MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY!

OTHER SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE

- ◆ Weakness or paralysis of an arm, leg, side of the face, or any part of the body
- ◆ Drowsiness
- ◆ Numbness, tingling, decreased sensation
- ◆ Uncontrollable eye movements or eyelid drooping
- ◆ Slurred speech, inability to speak, understand speech, difficulty reading or writing
- ◆ Dizziness and confusion
- ◆ Swallowing difficulties or drooling
- ◆ Blurred or poor vision in one or both eyes
- ◆ Loss of memory
- ◆ Headache (usually severe or of abrupt onset)
- ◆ Loss of balance or coordination
- ◆ Unconsciousness
- ◆ Personality changes

Q&A

ANS is proud of our ability to offer the latest in stroke treatment options, including the Merci® Retrieval System.

Q: What is the Merci® Retrieval System?

A: The Merci® Retrieval System is a delicate procedure in which the surgeon inserts a catheter and a small retrieval device through the patient's artery, and using x-ray threads the device through the artery up to the brain. When the retrieval device reaches the clot, it pulls the clot into a tiny tube and is then pulled out of the artery. If the entire clot was retrieved, the blood flow will resume and the brain will receive blood again.

Q: What is the main benefit of the Merci® Retrieval System?

A: The Merci® Retrieval System can be performed up to 8 hours after a stroke, occurs. This extends the treatment window significantly.

Q: What is the recovery time after receiving the Merci® Retrieval System?

A: Although each individual's recovery time varies; signs of improvement can be seen in patients receiving the Merci® Retrieval System very soon after blood flow has been restored. In most cases patients make a full recovery, and some don't need rehabilitation.

Q: Can the Merci® Retrieval System be used in combination with other therapies?

A: If a patient arrives within two hours of initial symptoms of a stroke and is a candidate for receiving clot dissolving medication through the artery, the patient would be started on a less invasive treatment with clot-dissolving medications. In severe stroke cases, a combination of clot-dissolving medications with the Merci® Retrieval System may be used. In that scenario, a combination of clot-dissolving medications and the Merci® Retrieval device will be used.

Q: Which ANS doctors are trained in the Merci® Retrieval System?

A: ANS is proud of the contributions made by Drs. Ronald P. Benitez and David Wells-Roth in bettering the lives of so many patients through this groundbreaking procedure. ◆

What's up Doc?



Ronald P. Benitez, MD

Dr. Benitez is one of the few neurosurgeons in the country who has built a surgical and endovascular practice. His specialties include the treatment of cerebrovascular diseases such as stroke using new and innovative techniques.

Catherine A. Mazzola, MD

Dr. Mazzola's areas of special interest include movement disorders, epilepsy surgery, brain tumors, spina bifida, tethered spinal cord, cerebral palsy, and hydrocephalus in adults and children. She also has a special interest in pediatric neurological disorders.

Brian D. Beyerl, MD, FACS

Dr. Beyerl specializes in stereotactic neurosurgery and radiosurgery for brain tumors and AVMs. He also practices general neurosurgery such as: brain tumors, spinal surgery and extra-cranial carotid vascular surgery.

Dr. Beyerl is one of the few doctors in New Jersey that works with the revolutionary radiosurgical device, the CyberKnife®.

Edward J. Zampella, MD, FACS

Dr. Zampella's specialties include spinal cord stimulation/intraspinal drug infusion, neurosurgical treatment of movement disorders, epilepsy, stereotactic radiosurgery, pediatric neurosurgery, brain and spinal tumors, spina bifida, and endoscopic surgery.

Jay Y. Chun, MD, PhD

In addition to the general practice of neurosurgery, including brain and pituitary tumors and skull base surgery, Dr. Chun's specialties include complex and minimally invasive spine surgery, and artificial discs.

Jonathan J. Baskin, MD, FACS

Dr. Baskin specializes in complex spine surgery, tumors of the spine, image-guided neurosurgery for brain tumors and spinal stabilization.

John J. Knightly, MD

Dr. Knightly's special interests include complex spine surgery, stereotactic radiosurgery, tumors of the spine, endoscopic neurosurgery and trauma. He also specializes in minimally invasive spine surgery.

David Wells-Roth, MD

Dr. Wells-Roth has specialized fellowship training in interventional neuroradiology and epilepsy surgery. He also specializes in minimally invasive and complex spine surgery. Together with Overlook Hospital, Dr. Wells-Roth provides access to the latest surgical advances in the field of epilepsy surgery.



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Adult and Pediatric Brain, Spine and Neurovascular Surgery



ANSwswers

**Atlantic NeuroSurgical Specialists
Winter 2008**

As President of Atlantic NeuroSurgical Specialists (ANS), I would like to welcome you to the second issue of ANSwers, published quarterly for the patients, friends and colleagues of ANS. As you read about the tremendous successes of our doctors and patients, you will notice this is no ordinary practice. And our patients are not ordinary people – they are special, unique and courageous. We value the relationships that we have with our patients both during and after their care is completed. ANS makes YOUR health OUR priority, ensuring that you and your family receive the care you deserve.

Please feel free to call our office with any questions you may have about the information enclosed. We look forward to hearing from you.

To your good health,



Edward J. Zampella



Dr. Ronald Benitez is one of the few doctors in New Jersey to perform the new Merci® Retrieval System for patients who have suffered from a stroke. "If you had a stroke thirty years ago you either died or lived with a permanent deficit," says Dr. Benitez. "It's mind boggling to think that stroke patients can have a complete recovery after this procedure."

Dr. Ronald Benitez

WELCOME to the second issue of ANSwers, ANS's quarterly newsletter. Inside you will find the latest information about our staff, practice and patients.

ANS is a premiere neurosurgical practice located in Morristown, New Jersey and is affiliated with New Jersey's leading healthcare system, Atlantic Health. Others affiliated with Atlantic Health include Overlook Hospital in Summit and Morristown Memorial Hospital in Morristown. Our doctors are board-certified and trained at the finest medical institutions. We specialize in the treatment of brain and spinal tumors, aneurysms, Parkinson's disease, spasticity, chronic pain and congenital, degenerative disorders of the spine, pediatric neurosurgery, and much more.

A lot of exciting events have happened since the previous ANS Newsletter. First, we would like to welcome Dr. David Wells-Roth as a new addition to our team. We would also like to congratulate Dr. Catherine Mazzola and Dr. Ron Benitez for receiving their Board Certifications. On the media front, Dr. Benitez has recently lent his expertise to The Early Show on CBS and the highly popular magazine, Reader's Digest, making quite a name for himself in the tri-state area.

In this issue you will hear about the Merci® Retrieval System, an amazing new procedure, and about those that have reaped the benefits. Be sure to also check out our Q&A Section. We are sure you will find some life-saving information for the entire family.

We hope this newsletter is informative and helps you to learn more about us, our skills, and the technology we use. ANS strives to bring you the best neurosurgical care possible. For more information about ANS, please visit our web site at www.atlanticneurosurgical.com or call us at **973.285.7800**. ◆

CyberKnife® is a registered trademark of Accuray Incorporated. The Merci® Retrieval System is a registered trademark of Concentric Medical.

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR THE PATIENTS, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OF ATLANTIC NEUROSURGICAL SPECIALISTS

A Patient Speaks Out

Steve Bohns, 57, and his wife Kathy were enjoying a nice evening together in their Port Murray home when Steve began exhibiting stroke-like symptoms. Kathy immediately called 911. Steve, not being able to talk or move his right side, was air-lifted to Overlook Hospital for emergency surgery. "I don't remember much about the incident," said Steve. "I remember waking up after surgery and seeing Dr. Benitez and a few nurses, who were all very nice to me."

In the operating room, Dr. Benitez discovered an occlusion of an artery in Steve's head. Using the Merci® Retrieval System, Dr. Benitez extracted a three-centimeter piece of clot. Hospitalized for only six days, Steve went home with a fast recovery, crediting the Merci® Device for sparing him

from undergoing any physical therapy. "The anesthesiologist who worked the case went to see Steve a few days after surgery," said Dr. Benitez. After having a conversation with Steve, the anesthesiologist came back to Dr. Benitez with



The Bohns Family:
Kathy, Steve, Vanessa and Keith

tears in his eyes and said, "I've been practicing medicine for 30 years and I've never been involved in a case that's been as dramatic or as great as this."

Today Steve Bohns has gone back to work part-time and credits both his family and his doctors for helping him achieve such a successful recovery. "My children and wife were such a tremendous help during this time," said Steve. "My son and daughter took over our family greenhouse business for me until I was able to return to work. I really appreciate all of their love and support." Steve also wanted to mention how wonderful Dr. Benitez was to him saying "what a fantastic doctor he is including how much he cares about his patients."

Thanks to the Merci® Retrieval System, Steve and his family are able to enjoy many more evenings together. Congratulations, Steve, on your amazing recovery. ♦

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The Merci® Retrieval System is a registered trademark of Concentric Medical.



Dr. David Wells-Roth joins the ANS staff

Atlantic NeuroSurgical Specialists is proud to welcome David Wells-Roth, MD to our team. Dr. Wells-Roth specializes in interventional neuroradiology, epilepsy surgery and minimally invasive and complex spine surgery. He brings great skill, heart and knowledge to the group.

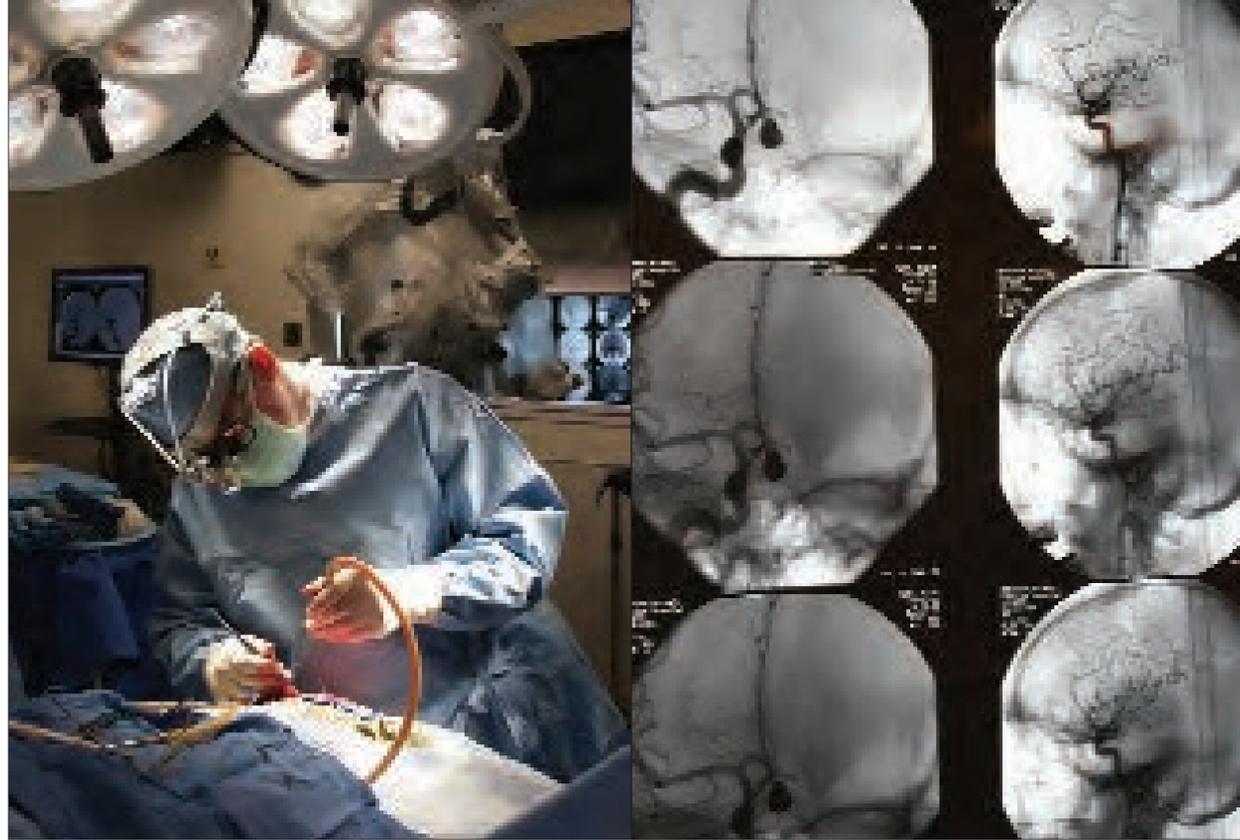
"ANS has a great reputation in the medical industry. Their doctors are trained in the most innovative, groundbreaking procedures in the field," says Dr. Wells-Roth. "I am honored to be working with such talented people."

Dr. Wells-Roth completed medical school at George Washington University School of Medicine and then finished his surgical internship and neurosurgical residency at Weil-Cornell Medical Center in New York City. In addition, Dr. Wells-Roth has specialized fellowship training in interventional neuroradiology and epilepsy surgery.

Dr. Wells-Roth joins Dr. Benitez in providing the highest quality cerebrovascular and endovascular surgical techniques with both acquired and congenital neurovascular diseases. Together with the neurologists at the Epilepsy Center at the Atlantic Neuroscience Center at Overlook Hospital, they provide access to the latest surgical advances in the field of epilepsy surgery.

Outside of work, Dr. Wells-Roth is an avid tennis player. Growing up in Short Hills, NJ, he ranked in the top ten in the juniors division and was a member of the U.S. Junior Davis Cup Team along with Pete Sampras and many other successful tennis players. While in college, Dr. Wells-Roth was an All-American and played professionally on the ATP tour. "After college I decided that my true calling was medicine and went on to Medical School at George Washington University. Tennis continues to be one of my favorite past times," says Dr. Wells-Roth.

ANS is proud to welcome Dr. Wells-Roth to our team! ♦



PRACTICE NEWS

A nurse practitioner (NP) is a registered nurse (RN) who has completed advanced education (a minimum of a master's degree) and training in the diagnosis and management of common medical conditions including chronic illnesses. Nurse practitioners provide a broad range of health care services, including some of the same care provided by physicians, and maintain close working relationships with physicians.

Our nursing staff plays an important part in the ANS experience. Please meet our nursing staff: Carl Stopper, Nursing Administrator and APN-C; Julie Supple, RNFA; Kelly Thynne, APN-C; and Pam De'Angeles, RN. Carl, Julie, Kelly and Pam look forward to assisting our patients achieve excellent health.



In addition to our nursing staff, Suzanne Weltz is our new Patient Liaison. Suzanne started with ANS as Dr. Zampella's assistant and has been with ANS for over ten years. Suzanne is responsible for the patient experience, quality assurance, and patient satisfaction. ♦



Bottom Left: Suzanne Weltz, Patient Liaison.

Above, left to right: Julie Supple, RNFA; Carl Stopper, Nursing Administrator, APN-C; Kelly Thynne, APN-C; and Pam De'Angeles, RN.

(continued from front cover)

The Merci® Retrieval System is a delicate process in which Dr. Benitez threads a catheter and a small corkscrew-like retrieval device through the patient's artery. Using x-rays, he uses the corkscrew to retrieve the clot and remove it from the artery. "All procedures used to treat stroke victims are time sensitive; the best advantage of the Merci® Retrieval System is that it adds hours to the available performance time," says Benitez. "The procedure is technically challenging and does require special training, but in my experience, the Merci® Retrieval System has been a phenomenal improvement from other procedures."

Approved for use by the FDA in 2004, The Merci® Retrieval System is new to the medical community, and only a handful of doctors in this area, including Dr. Benitez, are trained to execute this ground-breaking procedure.

For more information about Dr. Benitez or the Merci® Retrieval System log on to www.atlanticneurosurgical.com or call 973-285-7800. ♦

ANS Clinical Specialties

Aneurysm / Neurovascular	Head Trauma, Adults
Artificial Disc Replacement	Head Trauma, Pediatrics
Back and Neck Pain	Hydrocephalus, Adults
Back and Spine, Complex	Hydrocephalus, Pediatrics
Brain and Spine, Tumors	Interventional Neuroradiology
Brain Endoscopy	Kyphoplasties
Brain Mapping	Merci® Retrieval System
Brain Simulators	Neuro-Oncology
Cranium, Minimally Invasive	Pain Management Center
CyberKnife®	Pediatric Neurosurgery
Endovascular Neurosurgery	Peripheral Nerve Disorders
Essential Tremor / Parkinson's	Pituitary Disorders
Fascial Pain / Trigeminal Neuralgia	Radiosurgery
	Seizure Surgery
	Spasticity

FAST FACTS

President Bush has been quoted as being amazed with the success of the Merci® Retrieval System in stroke patients.

Dr. Catherine Mazzola is one of the few female neurosurgeons in New Jersey.

Dr. Benitez was featured in Reader's Digest and on CBS News for his work with the Merci® Retrieval System.

Dr. Chun and Dr. Knightly perform more minimally invasive spine surgeries than anyone else in the state of New Jersey.

Drs. Benitez, Beyerl, Chun, Zampella and Knightly are trained to use the CyberKnife®, a revolutionary tool that enables doctors to operate on previously inoperable tumors. The CyberKnife® is only available in seventy hospitals nationwide.

Dr. Benitez is one of the few neurosurgeons in the country who has built a surgical and endovascular practice.

Dr. Wells-Roth has patented his Device and Method for Surgical Anastomosis. ♦



Clockwise, from upper left: Dr. Catherine Mazzola, Dr. David Wells-Roth, Dr. Jonathan Baskin, Dr. Jay Chun and Dr. John Knightly.