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**Minimally Invasive Treatment Available for  
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm  
— *One Man’s Story of a Life Regained* —**

[Cypress, TX, 4/30/2008] –Julia Garza worried about her father, who she cares for in her home, when she noticed he was in pain and had difficulty standing. Little did she know, he was suffering from a “**ticking time bomb**” – an **abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA)**. Candelario Marquez, who suffered a stroke in 1995, was brought by ambulance to the North Cypress Medical Center Emergency Department where a physician evaluation and CAT Scan quickly led to his diagnosis.

An abdominal aortic aneurysm is a bulge in the wall of an artery, which is almost always caused by arteriosclerosis — the buildup of plaque on the inside of the artery that damages and weakens it. The pressure of the blood flowing through the weakened section of the artery causes the artery to balloon, forming the aneurysm. If the aneurysm is not caught early enough, the weakened aorta can rupture, often resulting in death.

“We made it from the ER to CAT Scan and settled into an ICU bed within three hours,” reports Ms. Garza. Dr. Clifford Kitten, a North Cypress Cardio-Thoracic Surgeon visited with Mr. Marquez and his family and was scheduled for surgery. Marquez’s family knew that the aneurysm could rupture at any moment, but had comparable fears about undergoing grueling open abdominal surgery. That is, until they learned of a minimally invasive procedure that was offered at North Cypress Medical Center by Dr. Kitten.

In the past, patients like Mr. Marquez had only 2 options. They could wait and hope for the best, or they could undergo major open surgical repair. For many, neither option was particularly attractive. The Medtronic AneuRx AAAAdvantage Stent Graft System uses a minimally invasive procedure that is just as effective as open abdominal

surgery, but reduces the risk of major complications by half. Benefits include faster recovery time and improved patient quality of life due to reduced hospital stay. Implanted through a delivery catheter into the femoral artery in the upper thigh, the system is guided to the location of the aneurysm through the aorta by a process called fluoroscopy. In contrast, open abdominal surgery is an invasive procedure, whereby a large incision is made in the abdomen and the aorta is clamped above and below the aneurysm. The aorta then is opened, a surgical graft is sewn in at the diseased site and the aorta is closed over it.

Marquez is recovering well from his surgery and his daughter reports that he is more mobile and back to his “old self.” “Our follow-up with Dr. Kitten was so easy,” reports Garza, “We only live a mile and a half from the hospital. It is nice to have such a comprehensive medical center that is so close and convenient.”

Experts estimate that approximately 1.5 million Americans have a AAA but due to its asymptomatic nature, only about 200,000 are actually diagnosed each year. Warning signs can include abdominal or back pain, and the signs of rupture are extreme pain in the lower abdomen and back. During a physical exam, physicians may hear a “blowing” murmur or a “whooshing” sound over the aorta, indicating an abdominal aortic aneurysm is present. If you or a loved one is experiencing symptoms, get checked out by a physician. Early detection is the key.

*North Cypress Medical Center is a 92-bed physician owned acute care hospital located in Cypress (northwest Houston area), Texas. The hospital offers patients state-of-the-art medical care and technology in an upscale, five-star hotel-like atmosphere. Medical services include Cardiology, Critical Care, Emergency Care, Orthopedics including a Total Joint and Spine Center, Cancer care including Radiation Oncology, and Surgical Weight Loss. Visit our website at [nmc-hospital.com](http://nmc-hospital.com) for more information.*