

ANNIVERSARY

HPA CELEBRATES 18 YEARS OF INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGY AND 10,000TH CATHETERISATION

THE Cardiovascular Intervention Unit of the Private Hospital in Alvor was the first unit in the region to perform differentiated diagnostic tests such as cardiac CT scan and cardiac MRI, including minimally invasive cardiovascular intervention techniques, catheterisation, angioplasty and percutaneous or transcatheter implants of the aortic and mitral valves by catheter (known as TAVI, transcatheter aortic valve implantation).

Operating for over 18 years, the Cardiovascular Intervention Unit has in its curriculum thousands of interventions and procedures and has now performed its 10,000th cardiac catheterisation.

Cardiac catheterisation is a procedure where a small tube, called a catheter, is inserted through a large blood vessel in the arm or leg and directed to the heart. The catheter allows the cardiologist to measure the pressure and oxygen levels within the cardiac chambers, thereby assessing heart function. These results will then assist the specialist in deciding precisely what type of intervention is to be carried out.

Cardiac catheterisation is a diagnostic test but may also be therapeutic. It is a diagnostic tool when it is performed to diagnose a specific lesion and therapeutic when, during the examination, the lesion is corrected, for example by placing a tube or ring in the clogged artery – in the case of angioplasty

– which is the most used procedure when a myocardial infarction is diagnosed.

The aortic and mitral valve percutaneous or transcatheter implants, carried out by catheterisation, has revolutionised the treatment of cardiac patients, particularly those suffering from severe aortic stenosis (one of the most common diseases of the elderly), be it severe and inoperable or at very high risk for open heart surgery.

In its Hybrid Operating Theatre, the Private Hospital in Alvor boasts the most advanced technology in this area, where procedures in interventional cardiology as well as cardiothoracic surgery are carried out.



The treatment consists in the percutaneous implant of a biological valve prosthesis applied on a metallic stent (tiny expandable mesh tube). As this procedure does not require surgery or anesthesia, it is safer, resulting in a substantially quicker recovery period, combined with a hugely favourable impact on the patient's quality of life.

Mitral valve repair or

replacement by catheterisation is also considered the appropriate therapeutic option in patients with isolated degenerative valve disease or severe mitral regurgitation, and its repair is possible in about 90% of cases.

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Its multidisciplinary team of competent and very experienced professionals have tripled the number of cases in 2018, which also include emergency cases, when compared to the average of previous years.

As far as thoracic surgery

is concerned, the number of surgeries performed has also been significant, especially in lung cancer surgery, through minimally invasive techniques, namely by single-port video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery.

Article supplied by the Hospital Particular do Algarve Group, with hospitals in Alvor and Gambelas (Faro)

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