

PRESS RELEASE
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STATE-OF-THE ART EPILEPSY MONITORING UNIT OPENS IN FORT LAUDERDALE

Neurodiagnostic Equipment Helps South Florida Epilepsy Expert Identify Affected Areas of the Brain for Treatment

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL (January 21, 2008) – South Florida epilepsy expert Eduardo Locatelli, MD, MPH, founder and medical director of Florida Neuroscience Center (www.floridaneuroscience.com), today announced that he has opened a four-bed epilepsy monitoring unit with Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale. The brand new unit houses state-of-the-art digital equipment to monitor and assist with the diagnosis of complicated seizure cases while patients stay in comfortable private rooms in a medically supervised environment.

Normal brain function is made possible by electrical charges passing between nerve cells in the brain and throughout the body. Epilepsy, the third most common neurological disorder in the United States, is a condition that causes the brain to produce sudden bursts of electrical energy that disrupt other brain functions. These bursts may affect a person's consciousness, bodily movements, or sensations for one to three minutes.

Forty-eight-year-old Anthony Frank began having grand mal seizures when he was seven years old. For the next 39 years, he suffered seizures every other week which caused violent muscle contractions followed by a loss of consciousness for several hours. The fear of having an episode in public combined with the side effects of heavy doses of medication affected Antony's relationships, his self confidence, and his ability to enjoy a quality of life.

"I used to be uncomfortable holding my young daughter's hand for fear of experiencing a seizure," said Frank. "If I had a seizure while holding her hand, my wife would have to pry my hand away because I would clench my daughter's hand so tightly. My daughter was hesitant to ask for my assistance in doing her homework or even to play with her because she would be frightened of me having a seizure."

After years of being treated with various medications that were not overly effective, Frank's wife encouraged him to find a new neurologist who could possibly help him achieve a better quality of life. Frank was referred to Dr. Locatelli who ultimately admitted him to a hospital-based epilepsy monitoring unit. He was told that he could possibly be a candidate for brain surgery and

cured of his seizures if Dr. Locatelli was able to locate the portion of his brain where the abnormalities occurred while being monitored.

In a monitoring unit, a patient is connected to an electroencephalograph (EEG) machine via dozens of tiny wires that are taped to the head. Here, Dr. Locatelli records continuous brain wave activity with simultaneous video recording. Brain waves during or between seizures may show special patterns, which help the doctor decide whether or not someone has epilepsy. Sometimes, a seizure can be induced if it is known what type of stimuli causes it, for example, music or loud noises.

“Thorough screening is essential for diagnosis and treatment planning because seizures are only a symptom of epilepsy,” said Dr. Locatelli. “In fact, forty to sixty percent of people with persistent seizures do not have epilepsy, which highlights the importance of proper screening and diagnosis.”

Dr. Locatelli was able to identify the affected area of Frank’s brain and recommended that he undergo surgery. This was the first time a doctor offered surgery as an option.

Frank underwent surgery 2006 and has not had a seizure since. He takes only a few medications and is enjoying life more than ever before. Although he chooses not to drive, he is making career advances in a human resources position, is better able to interact with his daughter, and for the first time, has confidence in himself.

“My daughter even comes to me for help with her homework,” he said.

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About Florida Neuroscience Center

Located in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Florida Neuroscience Center is a state-of-the-art private medical practice specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of epilepsy and other neurological conditions such as headaches and Alzheimer’s disease.

The Center’s founder and medical director, Eduardo Locatelli, MD, MPH, holds triple boards in neurology, neurophysiology, and neuroimaging. He holds a master’s of public health in addition to his medical doctorate degree. Dr. Locatelli has also earned certification as a Six Sigma champion.

Prior to opening Florida Neuroscience Center, Dr. Locatelli was the director of the epilepsy program, director of medical informatics, and chairman of the ethics committee at Cleveland Clinic Florida. He completed his internship, neurology residency, and fellowship at George Washington University. Additionally, he completed a fellowship at the prestigious National Institutes of Health. He is the co-author of Locatelli & Singh’s Handbook of Neurology and many scientific papers.

For more information, visit www.floridaneuroscience.com.

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