

A simple clip could increase quality of life for thousands of patients with a common heart problem

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The interventional cardiology team at the Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) recently conducted the first clinical procedure in Canada using the MitraClip system, which is designed to treat patients suffering from mitral valve failure, a very common heart defect that affects an estimated 1 out of 5 people to various extents starting at the age of 55. The MHI has implemented a treatment program for this condition and so far is the centre that has performed the most procedures in Canada with the MitraClip system.

This innovative and minimally [invasive procedure](#) is an alternative to heart surgery. Until now, mitral valve failure has been treated with medication or open-heart surgery depending on the degree of severity. The MitraClip system was designed by Abbott Vascular for inoperable or very high-risk [surgical patients](#) and can provide lasting treatment for acute mitral regurgitation. The risk of complications is low compared to [traditional surgery](#), and patients are discharged from the hospital within 48 hours of the procedure.

The first procedure was performed by a multidisciplinary team made up of cardiologists Anita Asgar, Anique Ducharme, Raoul Bonan and Arsène Basmadjian along with anesthesiologists Jennifer Cogan and Baqir Qizilbash. "All initial cases went well, and we believe that the long-term outcomes for this procedure will be favourable," stated Dr. Anita Asgar, interventional cardiologist and Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Medicine at Université de Montréal. "Since it allows patients to regain autonomy and quality of life, we believe that this treatment will reduce the number of hospital admissions and visits to emergency due to symptom recurrence."

The procedure consists of using a catheter to guide the MitraClip, a simple clip device, through

the femoral vein to the left atrium of the heart and then pushing it into the ventricle. The clip is then positioned so that it holds the anterior and posterior flaps of the [mitral valve](#) together. This creates a double orifice opening that allows blood to flow on both sides of the clip, which mechanically restricts regurgitation.

Provided by Montreal Heart Institute

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