

A Life-Changing Treatment

After suffering a hemorrhagic stroke 12 years ago, Leslie Redman of Jackson was left with the debilitating aftermath. Unable to walk or speak and plagued with stroke-induced refractory (uncontrollable) seizures, Leslie found herself confined to her home.



Megdad M. Zaatreh, MD,
board-certified
neurologist

"While I learned how to walk and speak again, frequent seizures made it impossible to live a productive life," Leslie says.

"For 12 years, I struggled with constant seizures,

took multiple medications and visited countless neurologists before my primary care physician recommended I visit the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at CentraState. Once I met with Dr. Megdad M. Zaatreh [MD, board-certified neurologist and director of the Epilepsy Center], my life changed for the better."

A PACEMAKER FOR THE BRAIN

Unable to drive or participate in everyday activities due to recurrent seizures, Leslie made the decision to undergo vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) in December 2011.

"To prevent Leslie's seizures from recurring, we performed VNS," Dr. Zaatreh says. "During this procedure, a small round battery device is implanted on the chest wall. The device triggers small electrical signals. These signals are sent to the vagus nerve—a nerve that runs from the brain stem to the abdomen—through wires connected to the device, and then travel to the brain. When the brain receives a warning for a potential seizure, the implant releases pain-free electrical pulses that prevent a seizure from transpiring."

While the device is programmed by a neurologist to meet a patient's specific needs, the patient is also able to control the VNS via a magnetic wand.

"While stimulation most frequently occurs every five minutes for 30 seconds, we're able to adjust the time frame depending on the body's reaction," Dr. Zaatreh says. "The great thing about the magnetic wand is that it allows patients to have control over their own bodies. If they feel a seizure looming, all they have to do is wave the magnet in front of the device."

A STRESS-FREE LIFE

Since undergoing VNS, Leslie is feeling better than ever. While VNS results vary from patient to patient, Leslie's seizures have been completely eradicated.

"I have regained my life," Leslie says. "I work out at the gym and maintain a very active schedule, which wouldn't be possible without the care and expertise provided by the CentraState staff. There's no other place I would recommend to patients suffering from chronic seizures."

To learn more about CentraState's Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, visit www.centrastate.com/epilepsy or call (866) CENTRA7 (866-236-8727). HD



▲ After vagus nerve stimulation at CentraState's Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, Leslie Redman is back to enjoying life, including her beloved rhododendrons.