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New LINX Procedure at SoutheastHEALTH for Patients with Acid Reflux

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It's about the size of a quarter, and it stops acid reflux on a dime. The LINX Reflux Management System is greatly improving the quality of life for many people whose lives are disrupted by gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD) and don't wish to continue taking a proton-pump inhibitor (PPI) due to adverse side effects.

General surgeon [Ronald M. Richmond, MD](#), of the Cape Girardeau Surgical Clinic, performed the region's first placement of the LINX anti-reflux system recently at Southeast Hospital.

In the minimally-invasive LINX procedure, a flexible, quarter-sized, bracelet of magnetic titanium beads is implanted around the esophagus laparoscopically. When in place, it supports a weak lower esophageal sphincter – the muscle that opens and closes to allow food to enter and stay in the stomach. GERD is caused when the lower esophageal sphincter relaxes too often and too long, allowing acid from the stomach to leak back into the esophagus.

Patients are evaluated for the LINX procedure by SoutheastHEALTH gastroenterologist [C. Brent Keller, DO](#), who says nearly 20 percent of the adult population experiences acid reflux symptoms on a regular basis. “Acid reflux has a variety of causes that can lead to GERD,” he says. “These can include diet, genetics, age and previous injuries.”

Dr. Keller adds that treatment for GERD varies, depending on a person's severity of symptoms. “Those with mild symptoms may find relief by implementing simple lifestyle changes, while others can control symptoms through medication therapy. The LINX system is a welcome addition to the options we can offer patients.”

Dr. Richmond says implanting the LINX system takes about an hour. “Most patients go home within 24 hours after the procedure and some go home the same day.” Once implanted, the device begins to work right away. “LINX is designed to last a lifetime and comes with no dietary restrictions,” Dr. Richmond adds.

Patients who benefit most from LINX are those who experience acid reflux on a very frequent basis and have not found symptom control through maximal medical therapy, Dr. Richmond explains. “The LINX procedure can help patients live more comfortably and heartburn free.”

“There is now five-year data on patients who have undergone the LINX procedure that proves the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of the LINX system. Nationwide, more than 12,000 patients have benefitted with long lasting results.”

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