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Dec. 19, 2014

Editor

The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018

Subject: "For First Time, Treatment Helps Patients With Worst Kind of Stroke Study Says" (p. A4, Dec. 18)

To the Editor:

The outcomes from stroke are devastating to patients. As neurosurgeons that treat stroke, we should make every attempt to prevent death or life-long disability for our patients. This excellently-designed study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* confirms that clot-removing procedures help stroke patients.

We would like, however, to clarify some statements from Ms. Kolata's report. First, previous stroke trials were not stopped due to brain bleeding, but rather based on predicted numbers of patients needed for the trials. Second, the cost of the devices is not \$23,000. This is the cost of the entire hospital stay, not the cost of the device or procedure. Finally, prior studies have demonstrated that clot-removal procedures help stroke patients. This new study confirms for physicians that there are viable treatment options for our stroke patients.

Approximately one-third of the 630,000 patients in the U.S. that suffer strokes each year have a large vessel clot, which means 28,350 patients annually could be candidates for these life-saving procedures, which, if not performed, would result in their death or life-long disability.

We welcome the positive results of this study which offers hope for our patients.

Sincerely,

Henry H. Woo, MD, Director Cerebrovascular Center
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