



AU Health is the first acute care center in the U.S. to offer breakthrough dysphagia treatment

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AUGUSTA, Ga. (May 11, 2023) – [Augusta University Health's](#) Stroke Center was [the first in Georgia](#) to be designated as an [Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center](#) a decade ago, and it is making history again as the first acute care medical center in the country to offer an innovative treatment for patients with dysphagia.

Dysphagia is the medical term for difficulty or inability to swallow affecting the quality of life for millions of stroke patients worldwide. Patients who experience dysphagia may be unable to manage their own saliva and may not be able to safely or efficiently eat or drink, placing them at high risk of complications, especially in the acute stages post stroke.

Phagenyx™ from [Phagenesis Ltd.](#) offers a safe, non-surgical treatment option that not only reduces the risk of dysphagia related complications but may also reduce the length of time a stroke patient spends in the hospital.

This innovative technology uses Pharyngeal Electrical Stimulation (PES), a form of neurostimulation, to induce and accelerate neuroplastic changes in the brain and restore swallowing control. The device is inserted into the nose, through the pharynx (throat), and down the esophagus to the stomach. Small amounts of stimulation applied to the pharynx has been proven to improve swallowing function. The Phagenyx Catheter may also be used for feeding, if required.

“We are pleased to offer our patients this novel and highly effective treatment for dysphagia, trouble swallowing” said Dr. [Dan-Victor Giurgiutiu](#), an interventional neurologist at AU Health. “I’ve been following the Phagenesis journey for the past few years. Based on the results of rigorous clinical trials, the Phagenyx device has proven to be both safe and reliable. We are excited to be the first U.S. acute care center to

evaluate this novel technology. We believe this therapy could substantially improve the lives of our stroke patients who suffer from dysphagia.”

Clinical studies have shown that the Phagenyx device can improve swallowing function, reduce complications including aspiration pneumonia leading to better patient outcomes and reduced hospital length of stay. The device has received regulatory approval in multiple countries and is currently in use in leading hospitals and rehabilitation centers around the world. It has recently received approval from the FDA and can now be offered in the United States.

“Thank you to Dr. [Jeffrey Switzer](#), Dr. Giurgiutiu and the entire neurology team for making this trial a possibility. Thank you to Phagenesis for their training and support. We are hopeful for positive patient outcomes in our post-stroke population,” said Katie Mixon, AU Health speech-language pathologist.

“We are thrilled to collaborate with AU Health and support their Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center with our innovative technology,” said Reinhard Krickl, CEO of Phagenesis Ltd. “Phagenyx is a new, safe and easy to implement tool allowing clinicians to intervene early when a patient’s health complications make them unable to engage in traditional rehabilitation solutions. Our therapy allows for quick and meaningful improvements in secretion management and swallowing function within a few days.”

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AU Health is Georgia’s only public academic health center, where world-class clinicians are bringing the medicine of tomorrow to patient care today. As the primary teaching affiliate of the Medical College of Georgia, AU Health provides the most comprehensive routine-to-complex care at AU Medical Center, which houses the region’s only Level 1 trauma center, as well as Children’s Hospital of Georgia, Georgia Cancer Center, historic Roosevelt Warm Springs Rehabilitation and Specialty Hospitals, Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home, and more than 100 primary and specialty care clinics across the state.