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Friday, October 30, 2009

IsoFlow device could aid in cancer treatments

Silicon Valley / San Jose Business Journal - by [Mary Duan](#)

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Robert Goldman thought he had achieved it all when the inventor sold his four patents on a music selection method used today for the iPhone and Zune.



Vicki Thompson

But his sister's death at age 40 from colon cancer set him on a quest that achieved an important milestone this month.

Robert Goldman's invention could improve the odds for cancer patients by enabling doctors to target more medicine at hard to treat sites.

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A woman suffering from a spinal tumor became the first patient ever treated with the IsoFlow, an infusion catheter developed by Goldman's company [W](#)

Vascular Design Inc.

The procedure was done at the [W University of Wisconsin Medical Center-Froedtert Lutheran Hospital](#) in Milwaukee.

While the woman didn't want to be interviewed, Goldman said she is now able to walk without pain for the first time in months.

The IsoFlow catheter is unusual in that it allows drugs to be delivered to areas of the body that couldn't previously be treated directly. According to numerous studies, this approach known as sideways perfusion lets physicians increase drug concentrations at targeted sites while reducing total exposure.

The procedure greatly improves a patient outcome when chemotherapy is being used.

Tumors, according to Goldman, develop a feeder vessel that provides them with blood. His idea was to make a catheter small enough that it could be threaded through a patient's blood vessels and directly into the tumor's feeder vessel.

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During the development, Goldman consulted with several [Stanford University](#) physicians, including Michael Dake, professor of cardiothoracic surgery at the university’s medical school. Dake told him he believed the device could work – if Goldman could produce it and get through the rigorous FDA approval process. It took Goldman two years to engineer the device. Because it was similar but not exactly like already approved devices, the FDA approval took just five years.

Dake called the IsoFlow “a valuable addition to the treatment arsenal,” especially in cases where a patient’s anatomy makes drug delivery difficult.

Stanford University Hospital interventional neuroradiologist Dr. Huy Do compared the evolution of the IsoFlow catheter to focused beam radiation such as the cyberknife or gamma knife that has come to supplant whole body radiation.

This device has “great potential” in the treatment of cancer patients, Do said. “It allows physicians to accurately target chemotherapy to the tumors and leave adjacent normal healthy tissue unscathed.”

In all, Goldman spent more than \$3 million of his money developing the IsoFlow, with an additional \$1.8 million investment from Josh Coughran, an investor and developer.

The market potential for the device is in the billions of dollars, Goldman said, but the real motivation comes from the memory of his sister.

“My only mission is to have another person see another birthday,” Goldman said.

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