

## PRESS INFORMATION

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## **New in Germany: Minimally invasive surgical procedure for treating epilepsy**

**The private Beta Klinik in Bonn is the first hospital to employ a new, gentle, laser ablation system for clinical use.**

The private Beta Klinik located in Bonn, Germany is at the forefront of a new surgical method for epilepsy treatment. By the end of this year, they will be the first clinic within Germany to offer patients MRI-guided, laser ablation technology with VISUALASE™. With this minimally invasive system, active epileptic tissue in the brain can be carefully and precisely removed using a laser

“With this cutting-edge procedure, we can now treat small tissue areas in a minimally invasive and very precise manner. The effects of the laser within the brain are visualized and monitored in real time using magnetic resonance imaging. We are proud and very pleased that this procedure can now be offered at the Beta Klinik,” declared Prof. Dr. Thomas Gasser, Neurosurgeon and Director of the private clinic. For epilepsy patients, laser ablation is an extremely gentle procedure.

“With conventional surgical procedures in the temporal lobe, cognition and even learning and memory functions can become damaged since the neurosurgeon must operate in critical brain regions. This risk can now be avoided due to the high level of precision that the laser employs,” emphasized Prof. Dr. Christian Elger, Head of the Competence Center for Epilepsy at the Beta Klinik. This is yet another advantage for patients.

The VISUALASE™ system is an innovative, MRI-guided laser ablation system in which laser energy is delivered to the target area by means of a small applicator. As the laser light is delivered, the temperature in the target area rises and unwanted soft tissue can be then be removed. Most patients can be discharged the following day.

In Germany, more than 600,000 patients suffer from epilepsy. The symptoms of the disease are varied: sensory disturbances, seizures with disorientation, and uncontrolled movements which can culminate in severe spasms and convulsions involving the entire body. Very often, the life of the affected person is severely restricted. Approximately two-thirds of epilepsy patients can be successfully treated with medication, but for the remaining third, so-called antiepileptic drugs are insufficient. Christian Elger states, “Epilepsy surgery offers a part of these patients the unique opportunity to cure their epilepsy.

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In just a few weeks, neurosurgeons at the Beta Klinik will start performing these procedures. The laser system is scheduled for delivery at the end of September.

The VISUALASE™ system has been utilized in the USA since 2007. In mid-2018, Medtronic secured CE certification from the European Union. The University Hospital in Magdeburg also plans on using this system for clinical applications. Currently, this procedure is not yet covered by health insurance companies, so patients must bear the costs themselves.

### **About the Beta Klinik**

The Beta Klinik, located on the banks of the Rhine River in Bonn, is an international private clinic which currently incorporates more than 30 specialist fields. Nearly 60 experienced doctors and over 180 employees are intensely committed towards fulfilling the philosophy of the Beta Klinik to the highest possible standard: the focus is on the person. A few of the features available at the Beta Klinik include: a fully-equipped surgical department, an angiography and intervention department, a recovery room with intensive care facilities, all of the currently available, well-established diagnostic procedures (MRI, fMRI, spiral CT, myelography, angiography, left heart catheter, mammography, etc.), as well as comprehensive care during in-hospital stays.

For further information:

#### **Beta Klinik GmbH, Information and Press**

Donatella Gasser

Tel: 0228 909075-514

Email: [donatella.gasser@betagenese.de](mailto:donatella.gasser@betagenese.de)

Web: [www.betaklinik.de](http://www.betaklinik.de)

#### **Medtronic:**

<http://www.medtronic.com/us-en/healthcare-professionals/products/neurological/laser-ablation/visualase.html>