



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **NEW CUTTING EDGE PROCEDURE BRINGS FRESH HOPE TO ACID REFLUX SUFFERERS**

**Wednesday 27 April 2011** – Lewis Tyler, a Network Rail Engineer from Middlesex has become the first person in the UK to have the LINX™ Reflux Management System implanted. The LINX™ System is a simple procedure designed to restore the body's natural barrier to reflux and eliminate the symptoms associated with Reflux Disease.<sup>1</sup> The LINX™ System procedure, a completely new option for the treatment of GORD, took place in a hospital in Manchester.

GORD is very common, with approximately 1 in 5 people having at least one episode a week. Common symptoms include heartburn, regurgitation and chest pain, these can be severe and persist over time.<sup>2</sup> When GORD is left untreated serious complications can occur, such as oesophagitis, stricture, Barrett's oesophagus (a pre-cancerous condition) and oesophageal cancer.<sup>3</sup>

Before the procedure, Lewis Tyler, who has been suffering from persistent GORD symptoms for the last three years, said:

“I have been experiencing the symptoms of GORD for the last three years and it has had a real impact on my life. I have constant throat pain, indigestion and sometimes regurgitation. I also wake up every morning with feelings of nausea – I try not to let it interfere with my work but I really have to drag myself in some days. I can't eat anything spicy, rich or fried and have had to give up caffeine and alcohol completely. I've tried all sorts of medication but none of them seems to make a difference any more. That's why I've decided to try the new LINX™ System.”

A week after the operation Lewis said “It is less than a week since I had the procedure so it is still early days however the throat pain from my reflux has gone and I am no longer having indigestion.”

Most people with GORD will be put on medication to relieve symptoms, usually a class of drug called a Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPI) that suppresses the normal acid production in the stomach. However, because the drugs do not prevent reflux, many people still experience the symptoms of GORD despite taking regular or high doses of medication.<sup>4,5,6</sup>

If symptoms aren't relieved by medication, the only other option (up to this point) has been fundoplication, a surgical procedure that involves wrapping part of the stomach around the oesophagus, altering the anatomy of the stomach. This option is often reserved for severe cases and success rates can vary depending on the experience of the surgeon.<sup>7</sup>

The LINX™ System offers a new treatment option for people whose symptoms are not well controlled by medication but not severe enough to warrant a fundoplication.<sup>1</sup>

The LINX™ System is a small, flexible band of interlinked titanium beads with magnetic cores that is placed around the oesophagus just above the stomach via keyhole surgery. The magnetic attraction between the beads helps keep the muscle at the junction of the oesophagus and stomach, which functions as a natural barrier to reflux, closed. This innovative technology means the LINX™ System can eliminate the symptoms of GORD without altering the anatomy of the stomach.

Research shows that the procedure is highly effective with as many as 86% of people stopping medication for GORD and 86% satisfied with their condition two years after the LINX™ procedure.<sup>1</sup>

Dr David Ashton, Medical Director of LINX™ Reflux Surgery, the company that delivers the LINX™ procedure, says:

*“Nearly 200 people with chronic GORD have benefited from the LINX™ System to date and the research has been very encouraging. This simple procedure can be completed in less than an hour and patients can resume a normal diet the next day and quickly return to normal activities. It starts working immediately offering patients relief from the symptoms of GORD and a quick return to normal life.”*

Not every patient with GORD will be at a stage where the LINX™ System is the right option for them. Patients can fill out a simple self-assessment questionnaire to help them make a decision about whether this is a suitable treatment choice for them [see attached questionnaire].

#### **Notes to editors**

To find out how people can access the LINX™ Reflux Management System go to:

<http://www.linxrefluxsurgery.com>

#### **For further information or to arrange an interview with a case study or expert please contact:**

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## **LINX™ Reflux Management System**

- The LINX™ System offers a new treatment option for GORD, reducing or eliminating symptoms through a simple, reversible procedure.<sup>1</sup>
- The LINX™ System is a small, flexible band of interlinked titanium beads with magnetic cores that help the LOS resist opening to gastric pressures, creating a barrier to reflux of acid and bile.<sup>1</sup>
- Swallowing forces break the magnetic bond to allow food and drink to pass normally through the LOS. The magnets then close the LOS immediately after swallowing to restore the body's natural barrier to reflux of acid and bile.<sup>1</sup>
- The LINX™ System starts to work as soon as it is in place and patients should be able to resume a normal diet within a few hours of surgery and can usually return to normal activities in less than a week.<sup>1</sup>

## **About Torax**

Torax Medical was founded in 2002 with the mission of creating a better treatment option for patients suffering from Gastro-Oesophageal Reflux Disease (GORD). Through these efforts, Torax has pioneered a new technology platform called Magnetic Sphincter Augmentation (MSA) which may be applied to a variety of conditions throughout the body. The LINX™ Reflux Management System for the treatment of GORD is currently under clinical investigation; active research is ongoing in other fields of use. The LINX™ System has received CE Mark and is currently being used to treat patients with GORD in Italy and Germany. Torax Medical is a privately held corporation that is based in the United States.

## **References:**

- 1) Bonavina L, DeMeester T, Fockens P, et al: Laparoscopic sphincter augmentation device eliminates reflux symptoms and normalizes esophageal acid exposure: one and two year results of a feasibility trial. *Annals of Surgery* 2010; 252: 857-862
- 2) NHS Choices website: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gastroesophageal-reflux-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx> [last accessed March 2011]
- 3) Macmillan Cancer Support website: <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Cancertypes/Oesophagusgullet/Pre-cancerousconditions/Barrettsesophagus.aspx> [last accessed March 2011]
- 4) Dean B, Gano A, Knight K, et al: Effectiveness of proton pump inhibitors in nonerosive reflux disease. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol* 2006; 2: 655-656
- 5) Sharma N, Agrawal A, Freeman J, Vela M, Castell D: An analysis of persistent symptoms in acid-suppressed patients undergoing impedance-pH monitoring. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol* 2008; 6: 521-524
- 6) AGA Institute: GERD patient study – patients and their medications. Harris Interactive, 2008.
- 7) Vakil N, Shaw M, Kirby R: Clinical effectiveness of laparoscopic fundoplication in a US community. *Am J Med* 2003; 114: 1-5