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**Press Release**

**HYGEIA: Mitral Valve Repair without Open Surgery**

The innovative transcatheter method for mitral valve repair using the MitraClip system has recently been adopted by the HYGEIA Hospital in Greece, as announced during a press conference held on Wednesday 23 November 2011. This has made HYGEIA unique in Greece and among the very few hospitals worldwide that offer comprehensive transcatheter procedures for treating conditions of all aortic, mitral and pulmonary valves.

The method is based on the transcatheter placement (via catheter) of a clip (MitraClip device) in the mitral valve, without performing open surgery. The catheter is introduced through the femoral vessels of the leg (similarly to a coronary angiography), without using extracorporeal circulation or performing a median sternotomy. It has been proven that this method significantly limits (or even eliminates) the mitral valve insufficiency, improves the patient's quality of life, reduces hospitalization stay (to 2-3 days) and ensures immediate return to daily activities.

The transcatheter repair of mitral valve insufficiency using MitraClip has been successfully performed on over 4,000 patients around the world. In Europe, more than 250 procedures are performed lately every month! For the first time in Greece, Mitraclip procedures were recently successfully performed on 5 patients at HYGEIA Hospital.

Dr Konstantinos Spargias, Director of the HYGEIA Transcatheter Heart Valve Department and invasive cardiologist, who was in charge of the team that performed the procedures, noted, "The Greek patients suffering from mitral valve insufficiency now have access to the most recognized and acceptable transcatheter treatment to date. We are very satisfied to have seen for ourselves the effectiveness of the MitraClip on our patients. The method was performed on patients with high surgical risk and the results were impressive, as valve insufficiency decreased significantly or was even eliminated in the case of some of our patients. It is also worth noting that this method is expected to particularly assist patients with other complex health problems, which prohibit performing typical open-heart surgery."

*Mitral valve insufficiency is the most common valve disease and it is estimated that around 8% of the people over 75 suffer from at least a moderate degree of this insufficiency. Severe mitral valve insufficiency causes*

*heart failure symptoms (easy fatigue, dyspnea and even pulmonary edema), but also contributes towards the development of atrial fibrillation (a form of arrhythmia) and stroke.*

*It is estimated that the number of patients who are considered suitable for transcatheter mitral valve repair is double to those suitable for transcatheter aortic valve repair.*