



OSF[®] HEALTHCARE

New swallowing therapy supports stroke recovery through the OSF Illinois Neurological Institute

Available for immediate release:

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(August 18, 2026 | Peoria, Illinois) – The OSF HealthCare Illinois Neurological Institute at OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria Illinois, is now offering the Phagenyx[®] System, an innovative technology designed to help stroke patients improve swallowing and recovery following severe dysphagia.

Dysphagia, or difficulty swallowing, is a common complication after stroke that can increase the risk of pneumonia, prolong hospital stays and, in severe cases, require patients to rely on feeding tubes for nutrition.

The Phagenyx[®] System combines temporary nutritional support with gentle electrical stimulation that helps retrain swallowing muscles weakened by stroke. The therapy stimulates nerves in the throat to encourage the brain to restore normal swallowing function.

"We're committed to bringing the most advanced, evidence-based treatments to our patients," says Arun Talkad, MD, director of the Comprehensive Stroke Center at the OSF Illinois Neurological Institute. "The Phagenyx[®] catheter not only provides temporary nutrition but also stimulates the muscles involved in swallowing, helping patients recover this critical function sooner. Studies have shown it can reduce the need for permanent feeding tubes, which can have a significant impact on a person's quality of life. This technology adds another important tool to the comprehensive stroke care we provide."

Nearly 800,000 people experience a stroke each year in the United States, according to the American Stroke Association. While paralysis, speech changes and vision loss are among the best-known effects of stroke, many patients also experience dysphagia, making it difficult or unsafe to swallow food, liquids and even saliva.

The Phagenyx[®] System is one of several advanced therapies available through the Comprehensive Stroke Center at OSF Saint Francis, supporting people throughout their recovery and rehabilitation.

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OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system founded by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis and headquartered in Peoria, Illinois. The system includes 18 inpatient facilities encompassing 16 licensed hospitals, two of which operate dual campuses in separate communities. Among these hospitals, 10 are acute care facilities, five are critical access hospitals and one is a continuing care facility. OSF has 2,141 licensed beds throughout Illinois and Michigan and employs more than 27,000 Mission Partners across 170+ locations. These include OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois, the third largest pediatric hospital in the state, and OSF OnCall, its digital health operating entity that offers hospital-at-home care. In addition, OSF operates two colleges of nursing; OSF Home Care Services, an extensive network of home health and hospice services; Pointcore, Inc., which is composed of health care-related businesses; and OSF HealthCare Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the organization. Advances in health care transformation take place through OSF Innovation as well as OSF Ventures, which provides investment capital for promising health care innovation startups. OSF HealthCare has been recognized by Fortune as one of the most innovative companies in the country and by Forbes as one of America's Best Employers for Healthcare Professionals. Learn more at osfhealthcare.org.