

Happy 100th Birthday

... Esophageal cardiology is 100 years old this year!

As you well know, the esophagus is important to the safe and effective performance of many procedures in adult and pediatric electrophysiology. However, you may not know that CardioCommand, Inc. is the only US company whose products are designed exclusively for monitoring temperature and cardiac activity within the esophagus.

The esophagus has been recognized as a useful "non-invasive window to the heart" since 1906 when Cremer first measured the ECG in the esophagus -- of a sword swallower! Since that time, the esophagus has been used for many monitoring and therapeutic procedures, including diagnosis of arrhythmias, diagnostic and therapeutic cardiac pacing, cardioversion and defibrillation, and esophageal temperature monitoring.

The close proximity of the esophagus and the LA (3-10 mm typically) allows electrodes in the esophagus a close-up electrical and thermal view of the posterior wall of the LA. Consequently, esophageal catheters have been used as a substitute for cardiac catheters in many ways, including Holter monitoring of the LA, and as an adjunct to intra-atrial catheters for localization of AF trigger locations in the EP Lab.

Ablation for AF has become a procedure that is often curative, but the heat generated in the LA can heat the esophagus, sometimes to dangerous levels. Thus, both the anatomic position and the temperature of the esophagus are important parameters during such procedures and can be assessed using CardioCommand's esophageal catheters. The electrodes on our esophageal catheters allow recording electrical activity, and permit fluoroscopic and/or electro-anatomic mapping of the esophagus position with respect to the LA. Similarly, the thermistor catheters allow continuous assessment of esophageal lumen temperatures. Customers have told us this is very useful, providing important information that would not be available without an esophageal catheter. Due to the comfort of our catheters, these benefits are available both in sedated and anesthetized patients.

We encourage you to contact us regarding how esophageal catheters might potentially be useful in your EP practice. Additionally, we are currently developing new catheters and systems for esophageal positional and thermal monitoring. These are not yet FDA approved, but they are potentially available for use with an IRB approved study protocol for centers interested in a new generation of esophageal monitoring.

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It's Right. Next to the Heart.