

# CONQUERING HEARTBURN



How a proven new procedure helped a food enthusiast solve his acid reflux

**F**or Rob Cordosi, finding the answer to his 25-year battle with gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) was a welcome relief.

"I'm a food person. I love to eat, I love to cook, and it really depressed me, loving all these foods, then knowing if I ate them I would suffer for it afterwards," recalls the 49-year-old government contractor.

When Rob first began experiencing acid reflux, he took over-the-counter antacids (Tums), but nothing stopped the burning sensation in his chest and the feeling of food lodged in his throat after every meal. Over the years, a gastroenterologist prescribed a variety of proton pump inhibitors (Nexium, Aciphex and Dexilant), which controlled his stomach acid but didn't



Rob Cordosi with his two favorite canines, Dewey (left) and Haley.

halt stomach contents from backing up into his esophagus. To prevent reflux, he often slept in an upright position to prevent choking in the middle of the night.

## A SOLUTION AT LAST

Two years ago, Rob decided to research his options. Fortunately, he lived just four



The magnetic attraction between the beads of the LINX implant augments the esophageal sphincter's barrier function to prevent reflux.

hours from the Heartburn Center at Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH), one of the busiest centers in the United States for the LINX implant, which

resolves GERD. Headed by G. Kevin Gillian, MD, FACS, the center pioneered the LINX procedure when it was approved by the FDA in 2012, and is the only training center for the LINX procedure on the East Coast.

It turned out that Rob was an excellent candidate for the LINX procedure. "When we see an individual who is dissatisfied with their medical management and they continue to have regurgitation symptoms, coughing, heartburn, loss of voice, chest pain and difficulty sleeping because of regurgitation at night, they may be appropriate candidates for this device," says Dr. Gillian.

During the LINX procedure, Dr. Gillian made five tiny incisions and implanted a small, flexible bracelet made of titanium and magnets around Rob's esophagus to prevent reflux. The procedure was completed in half an hour, and Rob was able to return home the next day.

"The day after surgery, my wife, Jennifer, and I went out for fish and chips and a Guinness. It was great. I didn't have any issues at all," says Rob, who is back to taking his two dogs on big adventures.

## The LINX Answer

Treating GERD with medication helps resolve heartburn by reducing the acidity in the stomach, but for individuals with severe regurgitation symptoms, a surgical solution may be more effective. The surgical gold standard, Nissen fundoplication, involves

using the patient's own tissue to repair the sphincter in the esophagus. The LINX provides the same benefit without altering a patient's anatomy. "The LINX procedure reestablishes control by improving how the sphincter between the stomach

and the esophagus functions," says G. Kevin Gillian, MD, FACS. "Our patients are off their medications the day of surgery, they're usually eating a regular diet the first day after surgery, and they are usually back to work well within the first week."

## HELP FOR HEARTBURN

To learn more about surgical solutions for heartburn, visit [inova.org/hbtc](http://inova.org/hbtc). To schedule an appointment, call **703.504.HBTC (4282)**.