

Cancer patients get “verichip” implanted ^[1]

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Calificación:



Marga Parés Arroyo / end.mpares@elnuevodia.com ^[2] endi.com ^[3] During “many years” Lazaro Rizo smoked without thinking about the future. Three years ago, he developed a cancer that damaged his vocal cords, forcing him to undergo a surgical procedure to make an opening in his trachea to allow him to continue breathing. Because after this procedure speaking has become difficult to him, Rizo has been searching for other ways that help him to communicate. For that reason, this retired retailer of 53 years did not think twice when he recently received an invitation to get a glass device, as large as a grain of rice and that will keep his medical information, implanted. “It is very important to have it available because, if I loose conciousness, it would say what to do with me. For example, because I have the tracheotomy, an oxygen mask must be placed in the neck (in the trachea), not in the nose and the mouth area”, said Rizo. Next to seven other people, Rizo had a “microchip” implanted under the skin of his right forearm, which will include his medical information, including the medicines that he takes and procedures he has undergone. The apparatus can be read with a scanner similar to the one used in supermarkets. Approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2004, “verichip”, as it is called, is distributed locally by Cybertek of Puerto Rico, which, as a initial trade, has implanted the small capsule, gratuitously, to 20 people, including eight yesterday, who were invited to the Oncology Hospital of the Medical Center. The procedure takes two or three minutes, after the patient

receives local anesthesia in the area, according to doctor Jose Abreu, medical director of Cybertek, who assured that, to date, none of the people who have received the implant has presented any complications. Angel Cortes, president of Cybertek in Puerto Rico, announced that, up to date, six hospitals of the country, including the Oncology Hospital, have joined the network of this system. According to what was said, Cybertek is in conversations with two local medical plans, Triple S and Humana, so that they include the apparatus in their cover. "To count on this apparatus is an advantage because, in case of an emergency, the doctor can know even when I had my last cold", summarized Andrés Vélez, another patient who received the apparatus. On the other hand Milagros Vargas, executive director of the Oncology Hospital, emphasized the importance of this apparatus for cancer patients, because, since this Hospital lacks an Emergency Room, they would have to be taken to other hospitals, where the information of the patient could be read through chip.

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