



Staffphoto by Travis S. Pratt

Dr. Garth Rosenberg spent time performing ulcer and vascular procedures for the impoverished in Tela, Honduras.

Frederick doctor brings care, surgical skills to Honduras

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Dr. Garth Rosenberg believes the United States has the best health care in the world.

In March, he took his surgical talent and some donated supplies to share this standard of care with the people of Honduras.

Working through the Wisconsin-based Hackett-Hemwall Foundation, Rosenberg and 23 other vascular surgeons provided free treatment of varicose veins to 1,500 Hondurans at three sites. Rosenberg was stationed in Tela, a town on the country's northern coast.

The varicose veins Rosenberg treated in Honduras are not the cosmetic spider veins some may think of, he said.

"These are severe, end-stage venous diseases that need significant attention," he said.

Varicose veins most often develop when the saphenous vein, which runs along the inner thigh, stops carrying blood properly from the leg. Left untreated, serious varicose veins can develop into ulcers, which cause difficulty walking and in extreme cases can lead to amputation.

In the U.S., surgeons often seal the vein shut using a heated tip inserted into the leg through a catheter, and blood flow is then directed through other veins.

In Honduras, Rosenberg and others used injections to compress the vein, triggering the body to redirect blood flow. This method takes weeks of continu-

al treatment with compression stockings, Rosenberg said.

While the free care can be a lifesaver for these patients, it's not the standard Rosenberg would like to provide.

"We can't follow up with them. We basically say 'see you next year,'" he said. "It's not the care you'd like to deliver."

The need for medical care in Honduras is so dire that some patients traveled for hours to get to one of the clinic sites, Rosenberg said. He recalled one woman who rode three hours on a horse and then six more on a bus to get to Tela. Each morning when the clinic opened, Rosenberg found between 30 and 40 people waiting outside.

Frederick Memorial Hospital's wound care center donated gels, gauze and other supplies

(See SLICE A-6)

Slice OF Life

Slice

(Continued from A-5)

used to treat those with ulcers, and Rosenberg said the donations went a long way. The hospital gave enough that Rosenberg could share with other doctors at the site who didn't have

the same supplies, and could send some home with the patients so they could continue to treat themselves.

Rosenberg said the trip is something he's always wanted to do.

"We've been blessed with

what we have here," he said. "There are so many people around the world who don't have access to care."