

FORT WORTH BUSINESS PRESS

Names George Cravens, M.D. a Community Healthcare Hero 2017



George F. Cravens, MD, FAANS, FACS

Founder, Center for Neurological Disorders and Chairman, Department of Neurosurgery/John Peter Smith Hospital

If you have a stroke, the first responder who shows up, whether from the Fort Worth Fire Department or MedStar Mobile Healthcare, will be working from a treatment protocol on how to handle that medical emergency.

You can thank Dr. George F. Cravens in part for that treatment plan.

Strokes – cerebrovascular diseases or “brain attacks” as they are sometimes called – are the fifth-leading cause of death and a major cause of serious disability for adults in the United States, says the Centers for Disease Control. The CDC reported 133,103 deaths in 2014, and says that about 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke each year.

Cravens, founder of the Center for Neurological Disorders and chairman of John Peter Smith Hospital’s Department of Neurosurgery, is a leader in the Brain Attack Coalition, a group of 500 volunteer physicians nationwide that provides information and education for those most likely to encounter a stroke victim.

Cravens was volunteering as early as the 1990s to work with emergency medical service personnel in the Fort Worth area, always stressing that minutes are important in the care of stroke patients. He has also served on the Texas Governor’s EMS and Trauma Advisory Council Stroke Committee.

Under his leadership, JPS earned certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by the Texas Department of State Health Services, one of 17 in the state. Patients are brought to the JPS Emergency Department from Tarrant, Parker, Palo Pinto, Johnson, Hood and Wise counties.

Cravens has been an early adapter of a variety of treatment procedures including image-guided,

stereotactic computer assisted surgery. He has performed over 9,000 surgeries, including 3,000 craniotomies.

Cravens graduated from the University of Texas at Austin and Southwestern Medical School at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas. He interned at Louisiana State University Medical Center Charity Hospital at New Orleans and did his residency both there and at the University of Toronto Sunnybrook Hospital Regional Trauma Center in Canada.

After completing his residency, Cravens was awarded a fellowship in microneurosurgery at the Neurosurgery Clinic Hospital at the University of Zurich in Switzerland with Professor M. Gazi Yasargil. In 1999, *Neurosurgery*, the official journal of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, named Yasargil “Man of the Century 1950-1999.” Cravens says Yasargil’s commitment to curing diseases previously thought to be incurable inspired him to always meet challenges head-on.

“He is always the patient advocate and among the most respected neurosurgeons among his peers nationwide. He is both a resource and an example to medical professional at all levels,” a nominator said.

Cravens is a board member of the Davey O’Brien Foundation and a member of the University of Texas System Chancellor’s Council. He’s also interested in historic preservation and has restored the historic Flatiron Building in downtown Ft. Worth.

- Paul K. Harral



If you could make one change that would improve health care for everyone, what would it be?

Practitioners should be in it to help people. Health care is really about the patients, and somewhere along the way the industry began shifting the focus. We should get back to listening to our patients and building relationships with them.