



## Dr. Reza Malek

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Good Samaritan Hospital surgeon Reza Malek once fainted at the sight of blood while watching his father, who inspired his career, perform a surgery in his homeland of Iran.

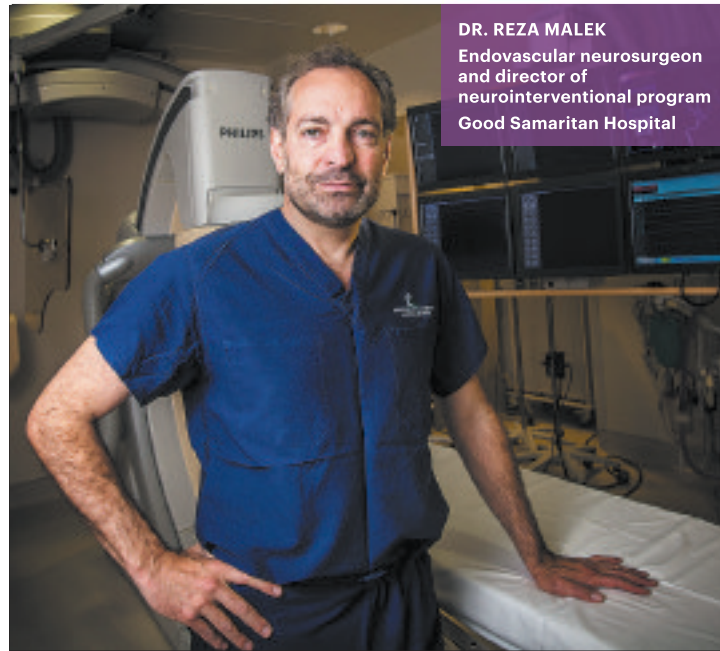
The impact of that day becomes clear when you consider the arc of Dr. Malek's career in becoming one of the world's foremost authorities in stroke treatment.

Malek pioneered surgical techniques using hair-thin catheters – guided through the body by imaging technology – to remove blood clots from the brain, or stopping a hemorrhage using micro-coils. As a result, the critical time window during which stroke sufferers can be successfully treated and returned to normal health and function has more than doubled.

"No blood involved, no mess and a Band-Aid in the groin," Malek said.

As much as what he has contributed to improving outcomes for stroke patients, Malek has also played a key role in building Good Sam from a primary stroke center to its status as comprehensive stroke center, which is relatively rare outside the circle of big university teaching hospitals.

"Like the MasterCard card, which they say is priceless, (comprehensive stroke



**DR. REZA MALEK**  
Endovascular neurosurgeon  
and director of  
neurointerventional program  
Good Samaritan Hospital

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center) status has been priceless for us," said Good Sam CEO Paul Beaupré. "We are recognized internationally because we share our data and we are published in many journals."

Although stroke patient care is not

Good Sam's most significant business line – that's the emergency department and surgery overall – Beaupré said the hospital puts more resources into keeping its stroke treatment at the cutting edge "because it's the right thing to do

in the community."

Malek made his career decision to specialize in neurointerventional radiology – now called endovascular neurosurgery – while doing a fellowship at U.C. San Francisco. There, he got to work with a new device from Mountain View-based Concentric Medical that allowed surgeons to pull clots out of the brains of stroke victims with minimally invasive, image-guided surgery.

The first patient he helped treat had a 90 percent chance of dying but was completely normal the next morning.

"We had a stroke survivors' reception last week, and to have them come up to me and see them – how well they're functioning and they're back to normal – that feeling is what gets me out of bed in the middle of the night when they call me," Malek said.

What he is beginning to work on now is advocacy to reform Santa Clara County's emergency medical services so that stroke victims are sent to the right hospitals immediately, as trauma victims are. It would be a model for the rest of the United States.

"I think it will have a huge impact on people getting the right treatment," he said. "Despite everything we can do (in San Jose), not more than five percent of patients in the country are getting stroke treatment when they have a stroke."

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