

Peripheral vascular disease, a narrowing within the arteries that carry blood throughout the body, results in severe discomfort and, when untreated, a four-fold increase in the risk for heart attack or stroke. Edwards' initiative in peripheral stents – tiny metal tubes inserted into restricted vessels through a catheter-based delivery device to open the vessels and help maintain proper blood flow – holds great promise for this under-treated condition. Edwards has forged partnerships to create a new platform in the \$600 million peripheral vascular stent market. LifeStent, a unique and innovative technology whose helical design is inspired by the DNA molecular structure – nature's building block – was first implanted in patients in 2002, and Edwards plans to have a broad offering of balloon- and self-expanding devices in the U.S. and Europe in mid-2003.