

## research update

### Breathing Alone

In February, the Plastic Surgery Center (Shrewsbury, N.J.) announced that in a rare procedure for people with spinal-cord injury (SCI), a medical team led by Dr.

speech and ability to eat, and will reportedly lower infection rates in his lungs.

"We are thrilled with Edward's successful outcome and the significant opportunity it represents for the thousands of people with SCI

decompression of the phrenic nerve and implanted the pacemaker. Through rehabilitation, Silcox will gradually be weaned off the respirator. He was paralyzed from the neck down as a result of a motor cycle accident in 2008.

Dr. Kaufman is part of the medical team at the Institute for Advanced Reconstruction at the Plastic Surgery Center, which is comprised of a group of surgeons who are highly skilled in nerve transplantation and advanced reconstruction. They perform a number of unique operations to help patients with life-altering medical conditions who are often told no treatment options are available.

Some of these conditions the Plastic Surgery Center treats include:

- Paralysis resulting from accidents and strokes
- Diabetic neuropathy
- Paralyzed diaphragm/ventilator-based breathing
- Facial reanimation
- Nerve decompression for migraine headaches

The Plastic Surgery Center's team of doctors has more than 50 years of combined experience performing

facial, skin, and body cosmetic surgery. These physicians offer cutting-edge cosmetic and reconstructive procedures and have developed a number of innovative surgical techniques available at few other facilities in the world. The center's doctors are committed to excellence providing exceptional, personalized care in a friendly, comfortable setting and using the most advanced equipment available.

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Dr. Matthew Kaufman (left) activated a pacemaker that enables Edward Silcox to breathe without a ventilator for the first time since his 2008 spinal-cord injury.

Matthew Kaufman enabled a 51-year-old man to breathe on his own—without a ventilator—for the first time since becoming paralyzed.

The multi-process procedure, which was performed on Edward Silcox of Langhorne, Penn., was completed at Somerset Medical Center. At that time, Dr. Kaufman activated a diaphragm pacemaker that allowed Silcox to immediately breathe on his own. The procedure is also intended to improve Silcox's

every year," says Dr. Kaufman, who is said to be the only surgeon in New Jersey to perform this procedure. "In addition to improved quality of life, eliminating the ventilator significantly reduces the risk of lung infection, which is a leading cause of death in [people with] SCIs."

The procedure followed an initial surgery on December 29, also at Somerset Medical Center, where Dr. Kaufman and his team performed a microsurgical