

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

May 2012

I would assume most of you know someone who has had a heart catheterization performed. According to WebMD, a Cardiac catheterization, also called coronary angiogram, is a test to check your heart and coronary arteries. It is used to check blood flow in the coronary arteries, blood flow and blood pressure in the chambers of the heart, find out how well the heart valves work, and check for defects in the way the wall of the heart moves.

The purpose of cardiac catheterization is to find out if you have disease in your coronary arteries (atherosclerosis). If you have atherosclerosis, this test can pinpoint the size and location of fat and calcium deposits (plaque) that are narrowing your coronary arteries. Results from cardiac catheterization help determine whether treatment with bypass surgery or percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), such as angioplasty, or medical treatment may be effective.

Since the MMH Cardiology Department opened in 2000, our expert physicians and clinical team have performed an average of 200 heart catheters per year. All procedures are performed with state of the art equipment using the most current American College of Cardiology Association guidelines. It is unusual for a hospital our size to have a heart cath lab, and our patients definitely appreciate and acknowledge the smaller, more intimate and personalized feel. One patient recently commented, "The physician and his staff were wonderful! They put my mind at ease, were personable and always professional."

The hospital is currently working to recruit another Interventional Cardiologist to work with Drs. Huhta and Becker. Dr. Becker is a board certified nuclear cardiologist who provides expertise in the detection and treatment of heart disease. He uses non-invasive cardiology tests to evaluate and diagnose disorders of the heart. Dr. Huhta is an Interventional Cardiologist who uses invasive procedures to treat heart disease. These procedures generally require insertion of catheters into the coronary arteries to treat a problem - thus the term "intervention." By having two Interventional Cardiologists on our medical staff, we will be able to offer heart catheters 24/7. A lot of time and energy has been spent to find "the right fit," and we hope to be able to announce a new physician soon.

As our services continue to grow, the Board of Directors recently approved the addition of a new Interventional Radiology-Cardiac Catheterization combination suite which is currently being installed with a planned opening date of October 1, 2012. This suite allows us to perform invasive radiology and specialty procedures in addition to cardiac catheterization with the most current and modern technology to help meet the growing needs of our community.

We are fortunate to be able to offer cardiology services here in Montrose and the cardiology staff members continually deliver big city medicine with a small town feel!

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