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**ECONOMIC
GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY**

Minimally Invasive, Maximum Impact



Interventional cardiology is not only necessary after a heart incident has occurred, it can also be a helpful prevention measure.

by Autumn Bishop, LMH Health,
photo courtesy LMH Health

It's only about the size of a fist, but the heart is the hardest working organ in your body. It pumps the equivalent of 2,000 gallons of blood throughout your body all day, every day, so it's important to keep it in top shape.

If you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol or other risk factors, your primary-care provider might refer you to a cardiologist—a physician who specializes in caring for the heart. But if there's more going on, you may be seen by an interventional cardiologist, such as Dr. Aaron Doonan.

What Is an Interventional Cardiologist?

Cardiologists care for patients with many kinds of heart conditions, including heart failure and vascular disease. Interventional cardiologists also treat these conditions, but you're more likely to see one after a problem has already occurred.

"The biggest difference between general and interventional cardiology is procedure-based. Interventional cardiologists perform heart catheterization procedures, which means we care for people who need stents or artery disease interventions," Doonan explains.

While cardiology was always his calling, Doonan also loves working with his hands. That aligns with the hands-on nature of interventional cardiology.

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Dr. Aaron Doonan

“Do the things that you always hear doctors say. Eat a healthy diet, and get some exercise. I recommend that you follow the diet and lifestyle recommendations from The American Heart Association,” Doonan continues. “When patients come to see me, we take time to talk about focusing on the basics. It can be hard to make lifestyle changes, but even small improvements have an impact.”

Managing stress is also a big part of the equation—one that physicians haven’t always talked about.

“Physicians are traditionally brought up to say, ‘Let’s manage that hypertension or cholesterol with medication.’ We haven’t always talked about taking a 30-minute walk to ease your mind or unplugging from social media for a bit,” Doonan adds. “Those things are important, because having a way to decompress is good for your heart, as well.”

Cardiology Care Close to Home

In February 2023, LMH Health entered into a strategic clinical relationship with The University of Kansas Health System (UKHS), paving the way for clinical partnerships that increase patient access to specialty care in and around Douglas County.

Traveling long distances to receive medical care can be challenging. Having interventional cardiologists such as Doonan available locally as part of the strategic clinical relationship can make a ton of difference. They can handle acute problems at LMH and prevent patients from needing to be transferred to other facilities for care.

“If you have to get in the car and drive an hour to see your doctor or to get all of your testing, it adds hours to your day, and that can be hard. Convenience matters,” he says. “While LMH Health can’t handle everything, we can manage most of your care and emergencies locally.”

Doonan loves working at LMH Health. He says the interactions he’s had between specialties, such as primary care and hospital medicine, have been outstanding.

“LMH Health has been such a welcoming and cordial community, both with patients and my colleagues. People are friendly and supportive, and my partners have been great,” he explains. “I find that it’s easy to walk down the hall with a smile, and people smile back. Being at LMH gives you all the good feels.” ▲



“I like to try and find and fix a problem, similar to tinkering with cars or maintaining equipment. I guess you could say that I like to tinker, and interventional cardiology is a lot like that,” he says.

LMH Health has two interventional cardiologists on staff, Doonan and Dr. Thomas Kurian. They each also provide general cardiology care.

“Interventionalists are usually called upon after a problem has occurred, but we also work with patients to prevent issues,” Doonan says. “Someone may come to me to get out ahead of a problem. They’ve had a family member who has had a heart attack, or they’ve got a high calcium score indicating a buildup of plaque. But if you come to me in the middle of the night, that’s a different story.”

Optimize Heart Health and Prevent Cardiovascular Disease

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women and people of most racial and ethnic groups in the United States. High blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking are factors that increase your risk of developing the disease. Prevention is key.

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