

# Vital Flow

News from the  
Dignity Health  
Heart and Vascular  
Institute of Greater  
Sacramento

SUMMER 2018 | FOR THE COMMUNITY

[dignityhealth.org/heartandvascular](http://dignityhealth.org/heartandvascular)

## Atrial Fibrillation: Reducing the Greatest Risk



*Dignity Health Heart and Vascular Institute offers advanced therapies for patients living with atrial fibrillation, led by Drs. Gearoid O'Neill, Walt Marquardt, and Arash Aryana.*

Affecting an estimated five million Americans, atrial fibrillation (AF) is an increasingly common type of irregular heartbeat. That number is expected to skyrocket in coming years, more than doubling by 2030.

The majority of AF patients experience symptoms such as palpitations, fatigue and a general feeling of being unwell.

However even for those who don't experience symptoms, the condition can still be life-threatening and is associated with greater risk of life-threatening complications including stroke and cardiovascular disease.

### Atrial Fibrillation & Stroke Risk

AF is the most common type of irregular heartbeat, often caused when the upper chambers of the heart beat unpredictably and rapidly.

"In AF, the top chambers of the heart, also known as the atria, begin to 'fibrillate,' which means that they don't contract normally, which leads to increased pooling of blood within the heart," explains Arash Aryana, MD, FACC, Cardiac Electrophysiologist. "This can form a clot which can travel to the brain, resulting in a debilitating stroke. That is the danger of living with AF that is not being properly treated or controlled."

People with AF are at five times greater risk of stroke, the leading cause of adult disability worldwide. In fact, 15-20% of all strokes are AF-related. Research also shows that AF-related strokes tend to be even more debilitating and deadly than non-AF strokes.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Coverage for PAD Rehab

Medicare and many other health plans now cover supervised exercise therapy (rehabilitation) as a beneficial and safe treatment for patients diagnosed with Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) who have leg pain during activity.

The purpose of PAD rehab is to build stamina and reduce symptoms through exercise therapy, medical monitoring, education, and risk factor modification. The PAD rehab support team includes nurses, exercise physiologists, dietitians and social workers.

PAD occurs when plaque builds up in a peripheral artery, creating blockages that limit blood flow. In addition to age, risk factors for PAD include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and family history.

Benefits of PAD rehab include relief of symptoms, improved limb function, enhanced mobility and improved quality of life.

If you are living with PAD, talk to your doctor about whether a referral for PAD rehab may help improve your quality of life.

# Heart Failure & Diet: Reduce Salt, Increase Flavor

By Leslie Kaneko, RD



Heart failure affects more than 5 million Americans. While there are a variety of lifestyle modifications that may help relieve symptoms, one of the most important is through diet.

A healthy diet low in sodium (limited to 2000 mg per day) is recommended. However, eating a low sodium diet can be challenging.

A great way to infuse flavor into your cooking without adding salt is to use fresh herbs. Learning to prepare, store, and cook with herbs can be a challenge but is worth the effort, yielding big benefits to one's health and one's taste buds.

If you are new to cooking with herbs, try to keep some of the most popular ones on hand: basil, cilantro, oregano, dill, thyme, rosemary, parsley, sage, and tarragon. Then, follow our suggestions (right) and reach for herbs rather than salt next time you are looking to punch up the flavor in your cooking!

**Basil:** Create your own pesto for pastas, poultry or fish

**Cilantro:** Add to salsas, soups and salads

**Oregano:** Great for pasta sauces, pizza sauces, soups, and potato dishes

**Dill:** Use in dips, soups, and flavoring meats or fish

**Thyme:** Flavor vegetables, meats and fish, or pair with rosemary or parsley

**Rosemary:** Use to roast or grill dark meats, pasta sauces or infuse in oils

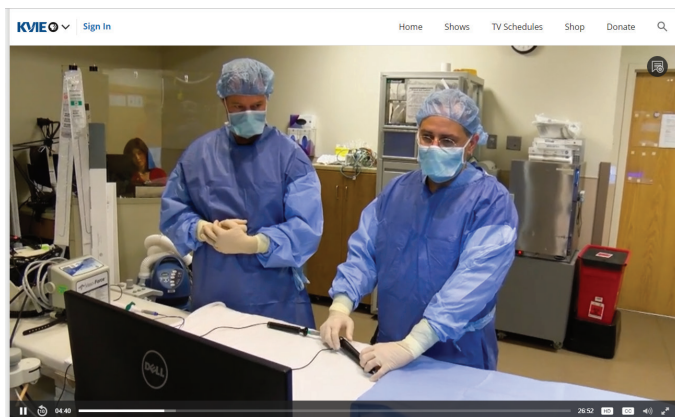
**Parsley:** Not just a garnish, use in pesto, soups, stews, or to add flavor to salads or dips

**Sage:** Infuse with root vegetables or with roasted and grilled poultry

**Tarragon:** Best known as key ingredient for béarnaise sauce, flavors egg dishes, salad dressings

## Dignity Health at the Heart & Stroke Walk

Mark your calendars and make plans to join the Dignity Health Heart and Vascular Institute team at the 28th annual Heart & Stroke Walk on Saturday, Sept. 29 at Sacramento's William Land Park. It promises to be a morning of fun and activities for the whole family. Watch for more information on registering in coming weeks.



## AFib Documentary

A PBS documentary featuring Dignity Health Heart and Vascular Institute electrophysiologist Dr. Arash Aryana (pictured on the right) aired locally last winter and will air nationally this summer. "Forever Young: Baby Boomers" includes a segment on atrial fibrillation. Dr. Aryana discussed the condition and his novel treatment approach of pulmonary vein ablation plus posterior wall isolation using the cryoballoon (also known as a MAZE procedure by catheter). Dr. Aryana also has a paper on the approach being published in the medical journal, *Heart Rhythm*.

### Multidisciplinary Approach to Care

Because of the serious risks associated with unmanaged AF, people diagnosed with AF are urged to work with their care team to identify the therapies best suited to them as individuals.

The Atrial Fibrillation Program at Dignity Health Heart and Vascular Institute provides comprehensive, collaborative care for AF patients. The team evaluates and treats patients with persistent or permanent AF who continue to be symptomatic by offering advanced specialized treatment options.

Through the program, patients receive a multidisciplinary consultation and evaluation by electrophysiologists, cardiologists and surgeons, who work together with the patient to determine the best therapy option to enhance their quality of life. In addition, an RN Program Coordinator assists patients with assessments, procedure planning, wellness coaching, monitoring and long-term follow up.

### Groundbreaking Treatment Option

One of the advanced AF therapies offered by the Atrial Fibrillation Program at Dignity Health is the Watchman® Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) device.

The Watchman is a permanent implant designed to close off the LAA in an effort to reduce the risk of stroke. “The left atrial appendage is a pouch-like extension of the left atrium,” explains Dr. Aryana. “In AF, blood can pool and form clots within the heart, increasing stroke risk. In fact, 90% of stroke-causing clots from the left atrium originate in the left atrial appendage.”

Using a percutaneous catheter, a physician implants the umbrella-like device during a minimally invasive procedure under general anesthesia. Patients stay in the hospital overnight and generally go home the next day.

The Watchman is the only FDA-approved LAA closure device that effectively reduces stroke risk from clots in patients with non-valvular AF. The worldwide implant success rate for the Watchman is 95%, with less than 4% of patients experiencing any complications.

Long-term data shows that the device reduces incidence of hemorrhagic stroke by 78%; reduces major bleeding events by 72%; and reduces overall mortality by 27%. In addition, 99% of all patients are off blood thinners one-year post-implant.

Talk to your doctor to see if you might be a candidate for Watchman or other advanced treatments for AF.

#### AF-Related Stroke:

- 1.5x higher disability
- 2x higher mortality
- 70% result in death or permanent disability

## AFib Event a Big Success

More than 140 men and women attended “At the Heart of AFib” in early April at Sun City Lincoln Hills. This free community event hosted by Dignity Health Heart and Vascular Institute of Greater Sacramento focused on the increasing incidence of Atrial Fibrillation and the various treatment options available. Watch for information about our next free community event coming up this fall.

## New Physicians Welcomed

Mercy Medical Group welcomed **Munir Janmohamed, MD**, to its team earlier this year. Dr. Janmohamed serves as Medical Director of the Mechanical Circulatory Support and Heart Failure Program at the Advanced Heart Disease Clinic.

Prior to his arrival in Sacramento, Dr. Janmohamed served as the Director of Heart Failure Outreach for UCSF Medical Center’s Advanced Heart Failure Evaluation and Therapies Program. He completed fellowships in advanced heart failure/transplant and cardiology at UCSF, in addition to fellowships in Nuclear Medicine and Heart Failure Research at the University of Southern California.

Mercy Medical Group welcomed cardiologist **Catharine Malmsten, MD**, to its Big Horn office in Elk Grove. Dr. Malmsten graduated from the medical school of UC San Francisco, served her internship and residency at UC Davis, and completed a cardiovascular disease fellowship at the Medical College of Wisconsin.



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## Classes for Your Health

### Cardiac Education Forum & Support Group

Call 916-453-4514 for dates and location (free)

### Cardiac and PAD Rehabilitation

Mercy General	916.453.4521
Mercy San Juan	916.537.5296
Sierra Nevada Memorial	530.274.6103
Woodland Memorial	530.662.3961 ext. 4531

### CHAMP®

Telephone-based education and medication management program to treat heart failure.

Call 916.564.2880 for more information

### Diabetes Management & Nutrition

Call 916.453.4514 for monthly class (free)

Call 916-851-2793 for 6-week series (free)

### Healthier Living with Chronic Disease

Call 916-851-2793 for 6-week series (free)

### Heart Healthy Diet Class

Call 916.453.4514 for monthly class (free)

### Smoking Cessation Class

Help for those committed to quitting for good. Cost of class is \$70.

Call 916.453.4268 (MGH) or 916.537.5299 (MSJ) to register