

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UNIVERSITY HEART INITIATES PROGRESSIVE APPROACH TO CATHETERIZATIONS

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JACKSON, Miss. – University Heart, a part of University of Mississippi Health Care, now offers an underused approach to cardiac catheterizations that reduces patients' risk of bleeding complications and shortens recovery time.

Dr. Cameron Guild, a cardiologist with University Heart, and several of his colleagues began using transradial access through the wrist for catheterizations several months ago. Transradial access is a process where a needle is threaded through the radial artery in the forearm rather than through a femoral artery in the groin. For most patients, catheterizations are performed through the femoral artery.

Cardiac catheterization is performed by inserting a thin flexible tube through a peripheral blood vessel in the arm or leg under X-ray guidance. This procedure is most commonly performed to examine the coronary arteries, because heart attacks, angina, sudden death, and heart failure most often originate from disease in these arteries.

Patients can often get up and walk within minutes following transradial access. "Access through the radial artery is much more comfortable for the patient," Guild said.

Following the traditional approach through the femoral artery, patients are required to lie flat on their backs in a hospital bed with pressure applied to the area for two to six hours.

Guild said transradial access is an option for most patients, but a patient's suitability for the procedure is determined by the physician on an individual basis.

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