

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMHC OFFERS CARDIAC MR FOR CHILDREN WITH CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS

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JACKSON, Miss. – The latest cardiac imaging technology has made it easier for University of Mississippi Health Care physicians to diagnose congenital heart defects in children and to establish the appropriate treatment.

Compared to echocardiograms, the imaging produced by a cardiac magnetic resonance (MR) exam provides excellent visualization of the entire heart and surrounding structures.

"It's easy for me to understand the anatomy because the images have so much clarity. The images speak a thousand words," said Dr. Andrew Rivard, radiologist and director of cardiac imaging at UMMC.

A standard coronary angiogram, which can help diagnose heart conditions, is the most common type of heart catheter procedure using X-rays. In contrast, a cardiac MR exam does not involve radiation from X-rays, and is an excellent exam to assess for suspected coronary artery anomalies in children.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center is believed to be one of 31 places in the world that offers MR coronary artery angiograms.

"With the advancement of this technology and its availability in UMMC, we are able to avoid cardiac catheterization in some patients and in others we are able to plan accurately for a procedure," said Dr. Makram Ebeid, pediatric cardiologist.

Dr. Jorge Salazar, chief of congenital heart surgery, said Rivard and his team have transformed cardiac imaging for congenital heart patients and contributed to the success of the congenital heart surgery program.

"The non-invasive imaging is at a world-class level and translates into even better care for the congenital heart patients. The detailed information provided by Dr. Rivard and his team enables the best selection and timing of a congenital heart procedure, whether surgical or in the catheterization laboratory," he said.

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical

programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at <http://www.umc.edu/>