

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMMC TELECASTS LIVE HEART-REPAIR PROCEDURES TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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JACKSON, Miss. – Dr. Makram Ebeid and a team at the University of Mississippi Medical Center performed two catheterized heart-repair procedures on Monday telecast live to an international conference.

Specialists at the Pediatric and Adult Interventional Cardiac Symposium in Miami watched, learned techniques, made comments and asked questions during the procedures. UMMC is the state's only location for catheterized congenital heart defect repair, and one of only a handful of offering it in the South.

An 18-year-old patient received a new valve in his pulmonary artery, which helps control blood flow from the heart to the lungs. In the second case, an 11-year-old boy received a stent to widen a restrictive blood vessel near his heart.

In catheterization a doctor threads a wire into a blood vessel, and guided by X-ray imaging, feeds it through the vessels to the heart, brain or other target area. The physician then uses various instruments guided along the wire to make repairs, open narrowed vessels with stents, burn or freeze problematic features, or remove clots or other obstructions.

Symposium organizers invited Ebeid, UMMC professor of pediatric cardiology, to perform the procedures live, a credit to Medical Center's cardiac catheterization prowess.

"This is tremendous recognition for the Medical Center and to what we do in the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory," he said. "It takes a big team of very accomplished people to do this and I'm glad we were able to participate in the symposium. A big thank you also goes to the UMMC administration for allowing us to schedule this on a holiday."

At the conference in Miami, cardiologists, their staff members, and device makers from across the world watched about 45 minutes of each procedure, asked questions and made comments. Ebeid explained details of each process, why he chose certain instruments and which methods he's found work well.

Although Ebeid has helped organize the symposium for years, these were the first case presentations from the Medical Center. Ebeid catheterized the 11-year-old patient through the liver and into a blood vessel, a technique still uncommon among interventional cardiologists.

"Usually you'd go in through a vessel in the leg and thread the catheter up to the heart. But we knew prior to this procedure the patient's leg vessels were occluded. The conference organizers asked me to present this case because I do a lot of those," Ebeid said.

Since catheterized heart procedures are far less invasive than open-heart surgery, patients recover quicker and endure less discomfort.

"Theoretically, the patient who received the valve, which was the more complex procedure, could go home tonight. We'll keep him overnight to check his numbers and make sure everything is working properly," Ebeid said Monday afternoon.

Dr. Andrew Rivard, UMMC assistant professor of radiology, provided imaging expertise before and commentary during the procedures. He said it's just as important for Mississippians to understand the advanced care available at the Medical Center as it is for practitioners around the world.

"This was an opportunity to see how physicians here can use their talent, training and devices to the full extent of their capabilities," he said.

Alongside Ebeid in the pediatric catheterization lab, Dr. Thomas K. Jones, professor of pediatrics and Cardiac Catheterization Laboratories director at Seattle Children's Hospital, helped narrate the procedures.

Jones, one of the symposium's course directors, said the 12-year-old international conference is built around live cases. The Medical Center's participation this year speaks to the catheterization program's reputation.

"We select cardiac catheterization laboratories and operators that are known to be experienced in these advanced interventional procedures in patients with congenital heart disease," Jones said. "Dr. Ebeid is very well known and has an international reputation for doing this kind of quality work."

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. 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 health-care enterprise includes five hospitals in the University Hospitals and Health System, and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. 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 population. 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 umc.edu/publicaffairs